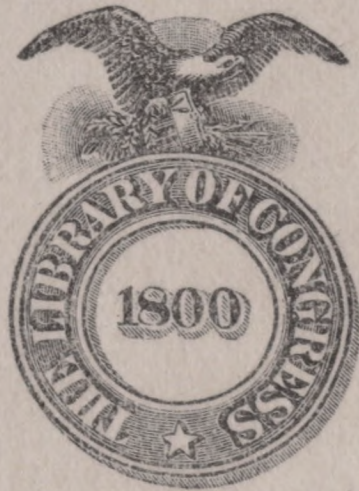


PEGS-FRESHMAN

CHRISTINA CATREVAS
AND JEAN WICK

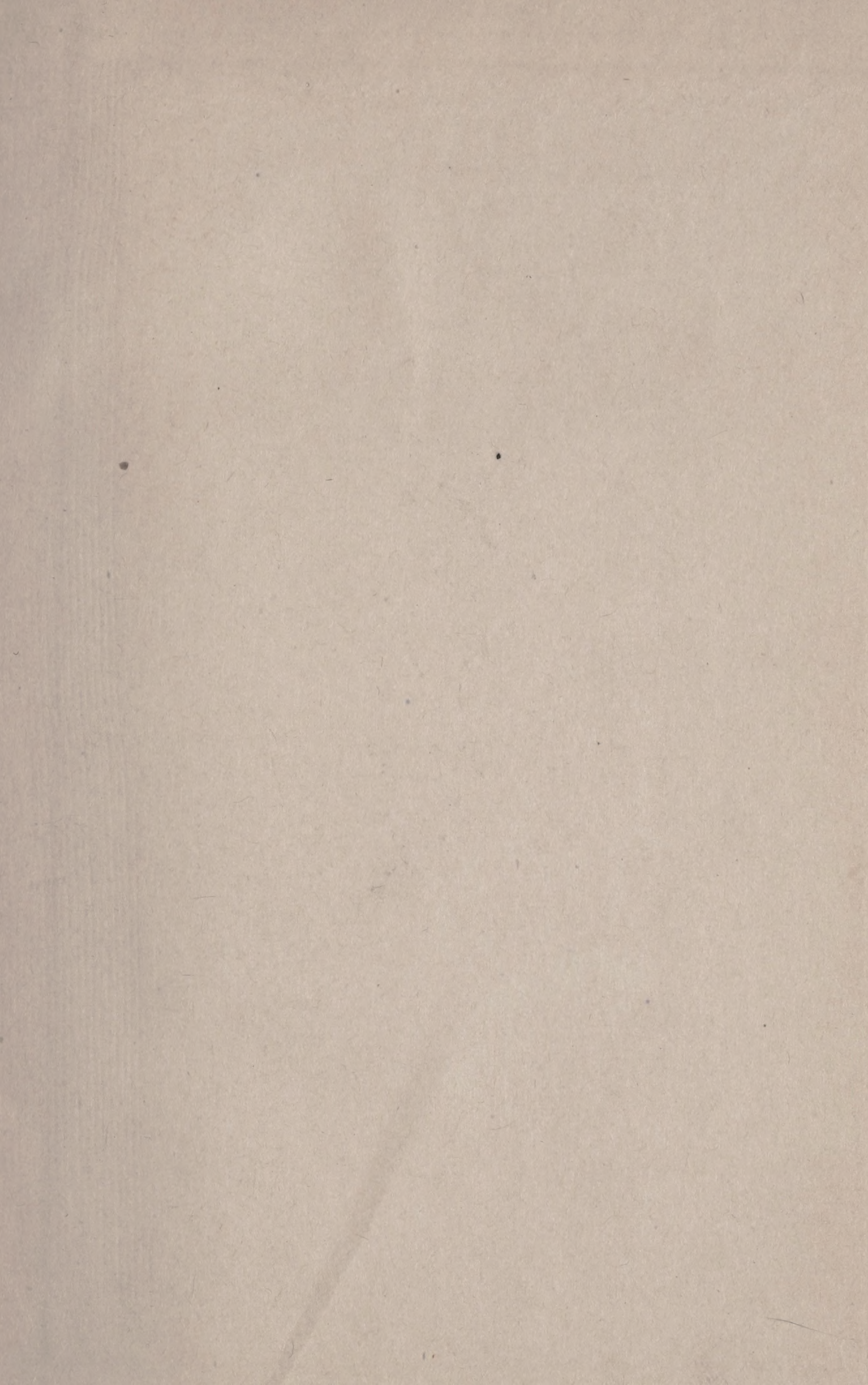


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“Keep quiet and don’t struggle,” and slowly she edged the girl closer to her.

PEGS FRESHMAN

By
CHRISTINA CATREVAS
AUTHOR OF "THAT FRESHMAN"
AND
JEAN WICK

THE JAMES A. McCANN COMPANY
NEW YORK 1920

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PEGS—FRESHMAN

CHAPTER I

JOURNEY'S END

“HAMP-den! Hamp-den! Do not leave any articles in the car!”

There was no need to call out the station. For fifteen minutes previously throughout the length of the train there had begun a feverish, feminine flutter and fussing about baggage in the aisles, the shaking out of cinders nestling in the folds of otherwise immaculate frocks, the careful mopping of heated faces, here and there the surreptitious dab of a powder puff, and the pushing in of stray wisps of hair; while now and again there was an expectant look out of the car window, as the slow-moving, dusty B. & M. wound in and out, through meadows thick with belated goldenrod, over creeks, past fields stacked with corn-stalks, until the mountains of the Havelock range came in sight, with their masses of just-turning green.

As the train came to a full stop girls pushed into the aisles, laden down with suitcases, handbags, rackets and golf clubs, and soon swarmed on to the station platform, now a kaleidoscopic mass of color and form.

“Oh, Lou! I am so *glad* to see you!”

“Same here, Grace! And to think we’re back—and without any conditions! Isn’t it great?”

“And Sophomores!”

And the girl addressed as “Lou” dropped her suitcase and threw herself into the arms of the hatless Grace who had come especially to meet her.

“All Freshmen this way, please,” called a girl in fluffy pink.

“Only Freshmen?” grinned Grace Gamby over her shoulder, attracted by the proceeding.

“*Only* Freshmen, Miss Don’t-be-too-fresh! This is not a Sophomore tea-party. All Freshmen and entering Sophomores—anybody that hasn’t been here before.”

“But may I not be permitted to assist you, O most gracious one?”

“You will assist me by de-sisting. No, truly, Ruth is here to help out. Do you suppose I want my lambs to scatter at the sight of a giddy Sophomore? Stand by, Freshmen, and I’ll read the list of those we were expected to meet on the 4.05.”

“Elizabeth Fielding—here, I see. Now hand over your trunk checks and fifty cents for each to my assistant, Ruth Dicks. Mr. Noah Simpson will bring your trunks to the College later on. Keep your bags and your suitcases.”

“Where was I?—Elizabeth Fielding—Oh, yes! Josephine Guilford — entering Sophomore — from Galesport, Maine? I’m from Maine, too. My name is Abbie Foster.”

“From Galesport?” queried the thin, spare Maine girl.

“No, I come from Portland. So glad to meet you.

I believe you are going to live off Campus, at Miss Cooke's house. Lucky girl. She always has a fine crowd! Miss Mary Hubbard—Mary Hubbard?"

"Where, oh, where is Mary Hubbard?" from the *de trop* Sophomore. "Maybe that's your missing Miss Bo-Peep ambling midst yon goldenrod. Can it be? Oh, *Ma-ry Hub-bard*. *Ma—ry Hub—bard!*"

"Here I am," came a soft tremolo from the off-side, and, skipping in a manner not unlike that of a young calf, a rather loosely-jointed, loosely-dressed individual, with arms filled with goldenrod, and stray wisps of hair straggling over her wistful brown eyes, joined the group.

"Here you stay!" said the Junior, rather decidedly.

"Would you say that is Bo-Peep, or one of the sheep?" whispered the facetious Sophomore.

"Oh, come, come. Cut it out," replied the girl with the notebook. "Next, Miss Margaret Louise Sutton Whiting, of New York!—All of that?" (Sotto voce.)

"Here, present," came a faint reply from the farther end of the platform.

"Did I hear rightly? Miss Margaret Louise *et cetera*—Ruth, trace that faint cry."

"See that wig-wag, Ruth, at the other end," said the Sophomore. "Maybe it's all the owner could do to drag thus far so lengthy a name!"

"Here I am," and the center of interest moved, as from the midst of a mountain of baggage peeped a face with a frank, winning smile and a mass of curly yellow hair.

“Is this all your baggage?”

“My aunt’s hat!” exclaimed the Sophomore who had trailed after. “Her baggage is as extensive as her name!”

“Grace Gamby! Leave my lambs alone—and go home!”

“But—but—” laughed the irrepressible one, “I think your lamb is afraid to come out. Are you, by any chance—trapped, my dear?”

“Rather!” shot back the reply—“being in the midst of my traps!”

“Oh, dear, dear. We’ve made a mistake. This is a case of mistaken identity. Perhaps you belong to the troupe of one-nighters who are to entertain in due course at the local opera house? The extent of your baggage, my dear. A certain ready wit. An air of opulence, so as to speak. Your idea of humor, you know.”

“G. G.!” cried the Junior, using the Sophomore’s pet designation. “Desist! Stop it! What will Miss Whiting think of us?”

“But—is this really all your baggage?”

“Why, yes,” the face had now grown serious and just a shade defiant. “No lady could decently do with less!”

“Oh-h!”

The Junior cut in quickly to avoid open hostilities: “Miss Sutton—I mean, Miss Whiting—I’ll see that Mr. Simpson gets your baggage up later.”

“He’ll have to make a solo trip,” from G. G.

“Be sure you have all the checks.”

And so down the list the Junior went, and in twenty

minutes Abbie Foster had gathered a score or more of entering girls under her shepherding arms.

“Oh, here comes the ‘Ark’ at last,” cried Ruth, as down the hill creaked and rattled an ancient bus-like conveyance. “And Ham driving! I declare, that Ham boy is growing some—for Noah to let him have such a responsible job.”

“Oh, are those their real names?” whispered Mary Hubbard.

“Yes, the whole family runs to the Biblical. But the horses are more modern. They are Mutt and Jeff. And they are about as evenly matched. And the whole Ark contraption comes out only on very special occasions. You Freshmen are honored. The College sends this. The upper classmen have to use the trolley.”

That wonderful ride—into an unexplored country where at the end of the road lay the goal of girlhood ambition! What matter that the wagon wobbled and lurched; that the horses panted and heaved; that the baggage took every available inch of space so that feet could not touch the floor and one clung now to the ceiling, now to the side, now to the girl in front, as each fresh rut shook everyone and everything like beans in a bag.

For the ride was wonderful just the same. In and out with the turns of the road, here great clay-pits where they made bricks, over there farms with their straggling weather-beaten rail fences enclosing crops of late corn and garden truck, and, all along between, meadows of green, spotted with goldenrod and wild purple autumn asters. And in the distance Mount

Havelock, towering over the lesser mountains, its peak bathed in the glow of afternoon sun, its feet in glories of gold and green and purple.

A soft breeze blew, and a fresh dampness came from the fields. A passing trolley clanged by, filled with upper classmen. They were singing, and their happy voices carried back to the Freshmen as they left them behind:

“Hampden, Hampden, as of old!
Naught our love shall sever—
Cherishing the Blue and Gold
In our hearts forever!”

“Sing, girls, sing,” cried Abbie Foster. “Don’t some of you know that?”

“Why, yes, we’ve been studying the songs all summer.”

“Well, then, *let’s*. For there’s the sash factory, and the College is behind that.”

The strident noise of the buzz-saws from behind the gray stone walls, the creaking and paddling of the old mill-wheel as the foamy waters fell over the dam and turned it round and round in the mill-race, a wide avenue of great trees and the end of the open country. And then—

“There it is! The College! Oh, can we say ‘Hip, hip’?” asked Miss Whiting, tingling with excitement.

“And hurray, too, if you want to,” said the Juniors.

“Gowan, and I’ll help you,” urged Ham. “It won’t scare the harses.”

“Nothing ever startles Mutt and Jeff,” said Abbie.

And as they creaked to a halt in front of the great stone gates before the Administration Building, it came

with a vim—"Hip! Hip! Hurray!" three times.

"Pretty good for Freshmen," came from the trolley car which was fast unloading its burden of girls and suitcases.

"Leave hope behind, all ye who enter here," from a Sophomore of the G. G. type.

"Don't mind them," said Abbie. "You are all going into Founders' Hall for an interview with the Registrar."

"It sounds like filing teeth," said Mary Hubbard, shivering.

"But it isn't—it's filing your names."

The ordeal was not quite so terrible as expected. There was not a Chamber of Horrors—the Registrar was no ogre. Tall, well-gowned, sleek and velvety-footed, Miss Lyons passed from Freshman to Freshman, who in awed silence awaited the official ceremony of becoming "one of them." Those months spent in preparations, those harrowing "exams" safely weathered and passed, were now bearing results—these girls were entering College—and this was the hour—the minute!

It was soon over. One at a time they registered their names, got their admission cards and recitation hours, and the houses they were to live in. And when this batch of girls was disposed of, there was an Indian file of three, plus bag and baggage, following Abbie over the greensward toward the "back door" of the Campus.

"That is Journey's End, girls," said Abbie, "and a lucky lot you are to get there. Have you all been

properly introduced? Let me see—this is Miss Mary Hubbard. And you are an entering Sophomore, Miss Josephine Guilford. And this is—er—Miss—Miss—Margaret—Louise Sutton—Whiting. At last it is out! My name is Abbie Foster, and I am a Junior. Yes, Miss Cooke is a dear, and the girls just love her. The meals—well, they're just scrum! Chicken every Sunday and in between! Yes, Miss Cooke raises prize poultry—chicken, chicken everywhere—and the non-prize ones are apt to be decapitated almost any time for fricassee.—There! Speak of angels!"

For as they went through the opening in the fence that served as a gate, underneath the heavy boughs of an apple-tree, they were suddenly introduced to an intimate picture of the Miss Cooke herself, weather-browned, dressed in gray striped taffeta, wielding a little stick and chasing before her an erratic Buff Orpington hen that had escaped from the chicken yard. Before her? Well, not always—sometimes to the right or left, when the hen steered off on a tangent, squawking and flapping her wings, refusing from pure perverseness to understand that she was to go back through a particular hole in the chicken wire she had come out of. So back and forth went the two over the uneven garden at the side of the big, many-gabled house, where the summer's vegetables had been partly pulled out, leaving little mounds and holes to serve as pitfalls for unwary feet.

"Oh," cried Miss Whiting, dropping a suitcase, "I'll help you shoo her! I'll get on this side and head her off."

"Well—well—" said the suddenly embarrassed Miss Cooke.

"And maybe if I get on this side—" came the plaintive voice of Mary Hubbard—and, as she stumbled in a hole, off went Biddy, squawking with fright, in another direction, much to the concern of Sir Buff Orpington Cock inside the chicken wire, who scolded and cried out and flapped his wings with indignation. But an astute movement on Miss Cooke's part, and an extra impulse born of sheer fright, made Biddy lift herself on her pinions with super-hen effort, back over the chicken wire—and the whole world was at peace again.

"You have your trouble, Miss Cooke," said Abbie Foster. "And here I bring you some more of your household." And she introduced her charges.

"Well—well—" said Miss Cooke, shifting her spectacles on her Roman nose, "I am so glad to see you, girls. Come right in and we'll introduce you to your roommates.—Oh, and this is Josephine Guilford from my old home town. So glad to know you, dear; we'll have to 'reminisce' by and by. Welcome to Journey's End, girls." And, as they trooped up the white steps of the porch, she picked up a big yellow Angora cat that had been watching the proceedings. "This is our Buff," she said, "and he's a good cat." Then, Buff having been admired—"Girls, I hope you'll be very happy here.—Right up to the second floor. And after you've all made one another's acquaintance, there'll be just about time to wash and brush off and take a breath before dinner-time."

It did not take long to make the newcomers at home. Those first chilly ceremonies were soon over. In a big corner front room, cool and bare-looking as rooms always are when they have not yet received the personal touch nor been filled with those little personal belongings that both show and make for character, sat two girls on the edge of their white-covered couches.

"You—you are Miss Margaret—" the slender dark-haired girl broke off, referring to a card tag on a suitcase.

The girl with the shock of yellow curls laughed.

"You may well study my card," she said. "Margaret—Louise—Sutton—Whiting, all of that. Are you not overwhelmed?"

Two deep brown rather serious eyes were lifted to her blue ones, not knowing whether or not to smile.

"It is rather a long name, Miss Whiting," commented the Freshman, a smile finally dawning.

"Some people get more than their share. My greedy parents are now properly sorry. My name impresses nobody. Dad calls me Peggy. The boys and girls cut that shorter yet. I'm known as 'Pegs.'"

A whimsical smile flitted over the frank face.

"It's short as bobbed hair," laughed the other. "Mine is simply Sarah Thayer, Miss Whiting."

"Now," protested Pegs Whiting, "you and I are here together, as far as I can see, for a sort of better or worse arrangement for the next momentous months. Let's start right. We'll cut out the 'Miss' from now on and forever more, Thara Thayer!—My, but you *do* have to twist your tongue to thay your thimple name, Thara Thara!"

The laugh was interrupted by a diffident knock on the door. The head of Mary Hubbard timidly entered, in response to the cordial "Come in!"

"Oh, come all in," cried Pegs, "and be introduced to my roommate. Thara Thara, this is Mary Hubbard."

"This is *my* roommate," said Mary, as she opened the door a little wider to let herself in and wider yet for her roommate. For the girl that followed her was large and neither diffident nor abashed.

"Mary, you don't do your duty properly.—My name is Cicely Becker."

"Oh, I forgot," apologized Mary.

"How very pretty," said Pegs. "I always call that Sise-ly. It sounds spicier."

"It's bad enough either way, but I've heard yours and you ought to be the last one to make remarks," laughed the owner. "I wonder how long it will be before the dinner bell rings. I'm starved." And she plumped herself in the midst of Pegs' white couch.

"That reminds me," exclaimed Pegs. "You two girls look so spick and span. Sit down and entertain each other while Mary and I wash and get the remains of New England landscape off our costumes. I'm as dusty and dirty as a chimney sweep. So are you, Mary. I suppose we might as well start right and change." And the next moment Pegs disappeared and could be heard splashing around in the bathroom down the hall.

That terrible, wonderful feeling of being alone: the sweetness of independence dashed with a bitterness of loneliness! That was the feeling of the girls as they

gathered about the dinner table that night and Miss Cooke said grace.

"I am sure it is good to have you all here with me," she said. "You have met each other in the parlors. Now you are breaking bread together. I hope that it will mean many close friendships that will last through life, and a deep unswerving loyalty to each other and to your College. You are indeed very welcome to Journey's End. Too, I hope you all will be happy. It won't be hard. I have one prescription which I always recommend to my girls—Be good!"

The girls laughed.

"Freshmen aren't always good," commented the girl opposite Miss Cooke, across the width of the table.

"Louise, you ought to know," said Miss Cooke. And, turning to the others, "You see, Miss Gaylord is a Senior."

"Are you really a Senior, Miss Gaylord?" asked Mary Hubbard, mouth agape in awe. "How wonderful!"

A laugh broke out the length of the dining room.

"Miss Gaylord, expect flowers from Mary tomorrow," said her roommate, Cicely Becker. "But, Miss Cooke, why is this called 'Journey's End'?"

"Louise can tell you better than I can," replied Miss Cooke.

"Why, it was this way—" began Louise. "But no, I think I won't tell just now."

"Oh, do!"—"Oh, do!"

"Miss Cooke, hadn't we better let the girls wait a while?"

Miss Cooke laughed. "Maybe. Perhaps they will

appreciate it better later," said she, "when they, too, have had experience."

Little by little, the ice among all these newcomers was broken. Diffident, shy looks gave way to open smiles, they began to call each other by their first names, and, surest sign of all, began to make bright and even "fresh" remarks—while the salad disappeared and second portions of ice cream and cake filled up the last lingering trace of emptiness.

But out on the piazza, in the soft, clear light of a still sunset, with the shadows of night just creeping on, that feeling of loneliness came back. They squatted intimately enough on step or rail, with arms about one another, those girls who had never seen one another before. But as they watched the sun slowly sinking in the west behind banks of fleecy clouds that crowned the high hills, there were pictures conjured in those clouds, twenty different pictures of twenty different homes.

"Oh, well, we're here because we're here, you know. So we might as well be cheerful," spoke up the girl with the long name and the shock of fluffy golden hair. "From here on the word 'homesick' is taboo in this house. What do you say?"

"Yes, yes, indeed!" came from all around. "I suppose mother is knitting on her sweater now."—"And Fanny is doing her Latin at home all alone."—"Dick is getting ready for Bowdoin; my, but he has to work hard nights!"

The thing not to be named was still in the blood of all of them.

And there they sat till the last purple glow of sun-

set. They watched the skies become duller and duller, and the mountains grow dimmer and dimmer, until sky and mountain were blended into one. The lights on the trolleys became visible and brighter, moving along the foothills like fiery caterpillars that crawled toward one another, met, and crawled away again. Then only the night breeze, that wafted across the stillness of fields and brought with it the smell of orchards heavy with apples.

CHAPTER II

GETTING ACCLIMATED

PEGS WHITING awoke with a start and stared around her, trying to recollect where she was. The room was bright with daylight and the keen fresh coolness of early morning penetrated through the wide open window. The persistent "cheer-re-ree" of robins came from the tops of nearby trees.

And then the ringing of a ponderous bell telling the hour. It was six o'clock. Pegs, thoroughly awake, went over the happenings of the preceding twenty-four hours. She was away from home, at College—at College! That must have been the clock on Founder's Hall striking.

This was to be the Freshmen's first day at College. Pegs was eager to get up and wondered when the rising bell would ring. Across on the other couch a girl with soft black hair was still sleeping. A deep-voiced rooster crowed lustily in the back yard, and a pert squeaky young thing replied a little further away. A wagon creaked by in the road, the driver holding conversation with a passer-by.

But that comfortable feeling of lying there awake without having to get up was not to last long, and the ringing of the rising bell half an hour later brought Pegs to her feet.

"What is it?" asked Thara, sitting up suddenly and rubbing her eyes still heavy with sleep.

"Time to get up," called Pegs as she disappeared in her kimono, bath-towel and sponge in hand, through the door of their room.

Miss Cooke did not let her girls start off hungry that morning. A wonderful breakfast was theirs—a breakfast of delicious fish-cakes and biscuits and fresh, crisp doughnuts and hot coffee. Effie in the kitchen had done her best, assisted not a little by Josephine Guilford, who had come to help in Miss Cooke's household and thus pay her way through her Sophomore year of College.

What a sense of well-being comes with a good breakfast! But there was not much loitering afterwards, for beds had to be made, rooms straightened out, and a load of trunks that had arrived and were clustered in a corner of the yard had to be claimed and disposed of.

Clang, clang! Clang, clang!

That was the Chapel bell, which sent the Freshmen scurrying to find their recitation cards, pencils and notebooks. And in a few minutes, along the white gravel path that led from the apple-tree gate, went gay, laughing groups of girls in fours and fives, arm in arm, to answer the summons.

At the Chapel door they were met by upper classmen who assigned them to seats as they came. Within all was silence, with an air of serenity and beauty that seemed to envelop all. The Freshmen were awed and silent, casting only an occasional glance about them. Timid, confident, "fresh," and homesick Freshmen

were there, Freshmen of all kinds, assembled together for the first time in a class of two hundred and fifty.

The Sophomores and Juniors were filling the seats in front of them, grouped in the order of their year, and, at the very front, the Seniors. At the right of the platform, facing the center, was the Choir, and on the left side the Faculty, who were coming in one by one from a door in the rear of the Chapel. The Freshmen regarded this august body of women (and two or three men) with not a little awe, for they still recalled vividly the examinations they had taken from them the preceding June. Here and there one was picked out and recognized—with varied feelings.

Up in the gallery, fond relatives who had brought their girls to College, were fanning themselves and whispering—mothers, and here and there a father, or a doting aunt. They smiled proudly upon the groups of eager Freshmen below them, and picked out their own with great satisfaction as the girls arrived and took their seats in the body of the Chapel.

At the organ sat Professor Howard in his voluminous gown, looking on all this, smiling and nodding and smiling again as he recognized each comer, till the smile became continuous and permanent.

As the Chapel bell died down to a toll, he ran his fingers over the keys and the music of the soft, beautiful "Andantino" arose, searching the roof and singing among the rafters and then dying out gently again with a clutch at the heart strings.

As the organ began the President of the College mounted the platform, from one of the little doors in the rear. She came quietly, softly, her long

black doctor's gown falling in graceful folds from her shoulders and adding to her dignity and poise. A smile lighted her eyes, a smile of proud appropriation over those splendid girls in the assembly. And every Freshman felt that Miss Hartley meant a special message of encouragement and inspiration to her for her College career. For the president was of that rare type that can by mere strength and sweetness of personality encourage others to strive and to do.

As the organ chords died down altogether, Miss Hartley arose for the invocation, and the prayer that followed had to do with the welfare of the students, both old and new. Her allusions to home and friends awoke again that tormenting feeling and brought a choky sensation to the throat and tears to the eyes.

But it did not last long, for when the prayer was over and the organ pealed forth the bars of that fine inspirational hymn, there came confidence with every note, assurance with every word.

“In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time!
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime!

“When the woes of life o'ertake me,
Hopes deceive and fears annoy,
Never shall the Cross forsake me—
Lo! It glows with peace and joy.

“When the sun of bliss is beaming
Light and love upon our way,
From the Cross the radiance streaming
Adds new luster to the day.”

Every feeling of homesickness was wiped away, and assurance and confidence came stronger with the reiter-

ated response and their expression of Faith in the One who would be their guide all through their College career and through life:

“In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time!
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime!”

The words of welcome which followed brought them back to the strange reality of things—things they had always longed for but had hardly dared hope to experience, the things that even now were hardly recognizable as the substance of their dreams.

The students left the Chapel in order of their seniority while Professor Howard wrung from the organ that rousing “March Heroique” of Dubois, until every beam and corner reverberated with sound. As the Freshmen left he roguishly interpolated Mendelssohn’s “Wedding March” into the recessional, which brought genuine grins of appreciation, although the feeling of solemnity was not to be shaken off. The upper classmen to whom the scene and the associations were not so new, laughed and greeted one another joyously on the paths outside and across the green lawns, but the Freshmen went on their way, serious and grave, to their recitation halls.

They were of real beauty, those great stone halls into whose Oxfordesque precincts they were ushered. The ponderous iron-bound doors closed upon the fresh, green, free world of the Campus and opened upon the severe, restricting world of classroom. Staid professors went over the preliminaries of admittance in very businesslike manner, while the Freshmen gazed about

with interest at the photographs of Roman and Greek ruins hung on the walls and the busts of the Great Dead that stood in corners and ornamented closets and bookcases. The big wooden pyramids and cones in the Mathematics room made them tremble for the future. Only the English room with its smiling young assistant professor and its pictures of Shakespeare's house, the Stone Henge, and the portrait of Robert Louis Stevenson made them feel at home. This was College and thus passed the first morning.

Then back to Miss Cooke's for luncheon, and more visiting of classes in the afternoon, a trip to the Gymnasium, where little was done but much talked of, and the day was over.

That night after dinner they gathered in Peg Whiting's room—distract Mary Hubbard, Cicely Becker, Julia Talbot and Fanny Kincaid from upstairs, and two or three others. Pegs had just descended from the step-ladder with the aid of which she was hanging pictures. All around, on the floor, the chairs, the couches, were scattered trunk trays, clothes, pictures, tennis rackets, shoes, hockey and golf sticks, and innumerable odds and ends.

"Oh, don't mind the things. Just shove 'em on the floor and sit down anywhere," she exclaimed hospitably, as numerous knocks came on the door. "Thara Thara thought she was going to study Latin, but who can study the first day. I say the present claims us with all this mess of things to be put away; we are glad you came."

That "we" expressed the relationship of the two girls throughout the entire ensuing four years of Col-

lege life, and, if the truth be told, for many moons thereafter. Pegs decided for Thara, spoke for her, and snatched her book to make it impossible for her to work, while Thara smiled at her more impetuous roommate. Yet it is, too, significant of their life together that Thara managed to "do" Latin for an hour that night, and even had Pegs studying for a while.

"What do you think of College?" asked Julia Talbot, drawing herself comfortably on a couch, with some *objets d'art* on one side, and furs and framed pictures on the other.

"It's great!" voted Pegs decidedly.

"All I expected it to be," said Thara. "But let me tell you they'll make us work."

"It's awfully different from what I had expected," ventured Mary Hubbard in a plaintive voice.

"Different?" echoed her roommate. "Didn't you take exams here last June?"

"No, I took them in my home town. I didn't come here. And this College is so much—bigger—and more wonderful. It's so—so solid!"

"Of course it's solid," snapped Cicely Becker. "Stone and brick are rather apt to be."

"But I used to dream of such a different place—low-roofed and vaulted, and dim and mysterious."

"Dreams, my dear, dreams. Did you by any chance imagine yourself as the favored ghost? Wake up and come to. Even now you look as if you were dreaming."

"Don't, Cicely Becker!" defended Pegs Whiting. "Let the child dream if she wants to. It's worth while sometimes."

"I like that," retorted Cicely, seemingly taking offense. "Can't I do what I want to with my own roommate?"

"No! 'Not in the presence of Mrs. Boffin!'" she said, stirring up memories of "Our Mutual Friend." "Now I have it! You call it 'Sicily' Becker and I called it 'Sise-ly' Becker; but now I'm going to give you a nice little pet name—'Spice' Becker."

Fanny Kincaid haw-hawed and went over backwards into the clothes basket on the edge of which she had been sitting. The rest all laughed appreciatively and voted that the name fitted. In spite of the fact that Miss Becker was slightly ruffled, she accepted the dictum with the best grace she could muster.

"Go ahead and call me 'Spice' if you like. Don't blame me though if I try to live up to it!"

"But don't let that be your main ambition in life," said Julia. "What are you going in for, really? I'm going to try athletics for all it's worth. I want to make the hockey team."

"So do I," seconded Pegs. "I used to play on our prep school team and we had some great games! The most exciting of all was . . ."

"But," said Julia, when the game had been fully described and commented upon, "we'll have to get a team together right away, if we want to stand a ghost of a chance against the other classes. They hold the games in November here."

"That's just it!" said Pegs. "And I don't think it's fair to the Freshmen. It's just making us the goat."

"Make them change the date and put the game off until Spring," suggested Thara mildly.

"*Make* them!" said Pegs. "It won't be easy; we'll have to fight for it, if we want it. We're going to have a class meeting in a few days and organize. We'll bring it up just as soon as we can. Meanwhile, let's all get to work and arouse the enthusiasm of the others. I hope the class will be enthusiastic."

"I think it will," said little Ida Bradley who had been sitting quietly gazing out of the window. "After Chapel this morning I heard that tall good-looking girl with the red hair in our Math Class telling the other girls how she hoped there'd be a lot of hockey."

"That was Jennie Crowell—she's fine," said Fanny Kincaid. "But there's a lot to be done first—elect a Chairman, etc. But she's only temporary. By and by we'll elect our permanent officers."

"Some time after Christmas," interposed "Spice" Becker. "But we choose motto and cheer and colors first—"

"Not colors," interrupted Pegs. "We inherit those from the out-going Senior class. Our color is going to be navy blue."

"Well, I like that," said Spice. "Everything is cut and dried and settled for us Freshmen."

"What if it is?" said Pegs. "The class of 1919 carried that color to glory, and I guess the class of 1923 isn't going to fuss at it! They were the champion hockey players for four years—"

"And basket ball champions, too," drawled Mary, rousing suddenly. "I do like basket ball. But 1923 doesn't sound lucky to me."

"Lucky!" exclaimed Pegs. "It's *mighty* lucky for

us to belong to the Class of 1923! I'm proud of it! Three cheers for the Class of '23! Hip! Hip!—"

"Hooray! Hooray! Hooray!" joined in the others in all sorts of keys.

"What's the matter? What's up?" cried other Freshmen, flocking from all over the house and crowding in at the door.

"We're just celebrating and cheering for the class. Let's sing 'Three cheers for '23!—What was that, Thara, you had last night? Here, who can play the ukulele? There, that's right. Ida, you take the uke, Thara, you lead us. Thara's going in for the Glee Club," added Pegs to the other girls.

"Oh, Pegs, don't!" protested Thara.

"She's bashful. But she can sing anyway."

"But," suggested Thara, "it's 'quiet hour' and we shouldn't make a noise."

"It struck nine five minutes ago and we can do anything we want for the next hour," said Martha Wheeler, one of the girls who had just joined the group.

"All right, these are the words," and Thara sang softly:

"Three cheers for '23!
The class of the brave and the free!
With her banner of blue before her,
Three cheers for '23!"

"Now everybody!" said Pegs. "And louder!" And with a vim they repeated:

"Three cheers for '23!
The class of the brave and the free!
With her banner of blue before her,
Three cheers for '23!"

Outside the window came a shout that startled them:

“Pretty good for Freshmen!”

Heads went out of the window.

“Who are you?” they called back. “Freshmen?”

“Rah! Rah! Rah!

Rah! Rah! Rah!

Rah! Rah! Rah!

'22! '22! '22!”

“Why, they are Sophomores! Millions of them!”

They could now discern a sea of faces in spite of the dark, and individuals moving about restlessly.

“What do they want?” whispered the Freshmen to one another.

“Freshman came to Hampden fair,
Green she was as grass is;
In pig-tails she wore her hair,
For the rules she did not care,
Stupid in her classes!
Freshman, Freshman, Freshman, O!—
Freshman at fair Hampden!”

The Sophomores were out serenading the Freshmen and they gave them many tunes, expressly for their benefit. The Freshmen listened gleefully, but kept to the upper windows for safety's sake.

“You never can tell what Sophs will do,” whispered Spice Becker, who had great regard for her personal well-being.

But when finally the crowd of Sophomores moved away, to visit other houses, our Freshmen ventured down to the piazza and called in deep measured tones:

“THANKS—SOPHOMORES!”

And then, brave again:

“Three cheers for '23,
The class of the brave and the free!
With her banner so blue before her,
Three cheers for '23.”

CHAPTER III

FRESHMAN AFFAIRS

THOSE panoramic days ran one into another almost imperceptibly. New books, new studies, new scenes. The writing of diary-like letters home, and the haunting of the post office by the homesick ones. Rooms to put in order and to decorate. Frequent visits to the village store and the five and ten cent stores in the City. It seemed as if they were setting up for light housekeeping! And many and new were the problems with which they were confronted!

Indeed, the first mid-week recreation day, Wednesday of the following week, found all the Freshmen of Journey's End in the cellar, clamoring for the wash-boiler or for a chance at the tubs. For these daughters of more or less well-to-do households had decided that thrift was an end as well as a means, and that it would be much better to use the money of their allowance intended for laundry charges for more important things.

"Of course I'm going to do my washing," said Pegs Whiting. "Seventy-five cents is seventy-five cents!" And she gave her night-gown another rub on the wash-board, unmindful of the fact that the skin of her hands was getting redder and redder while the gown remained about as it had been!

Jo Guilford, the Sophomore of the house, was passing through on an errand for Miss Cooke.

"My, but you are all busy," said she, stopping to watch Pegs.

"I'm putting elbow grease into this as well as soap," remarked Pegs proudly, giving her gown another scrub. "But—it—simply—won't—come off." She stopped, out of breath.

"But you don't do it right, my dear," said Jo. "Do it like this." And she dipped her hands into the suds.

"Oh, I've been rubbing—oh, look at my hands!"

Pegs' hands were now both blistered and raw from the washing.

"Ah, there's the rub!" remarked Jo with a laugh. "Scrub the clothes—not the skin off your hands."

"I guess I rubbed off more than seventy-five cents' worth of my beauty," said Pegs ruefully, "especially if beauty's only skin deep! But if Spice'd ever get through with that boiler then I wouldn't need to rub so much.—Oh, Spice, aren't you through yet?"

"In a minute," from Spice.

"Making your clothes hard-boiled?"

They were indeed economizing. The items that went into Pegs' account book that week were: Clothes pins, 10 cents (permanent asset); laundry soap, 12 cents; blueing, 3 cents (expenses pooled); ice cream sodas, 68 cents; chocolates, \$1.20; picture wire, 10 cents; butter thins, 17 cents; fig newtons, 18 cents; chocolate, 35 cents; milk and sugar, on credit from Effie.

These girls believed in economy, but also in pre-

paredness. One would have discounted the three square meals a day they received, had one watched closely.

Luncheon hour found them tired and aching; the clothes that flapped in the wind in the back yard told the story—and more, too. The sight drew a smile from the usually serious Effie as she viewed them from a kitchen window.

“Those girls have been working hard this morning,” she said to Ham, who had come in for a drink of water after chopping about a cord of wood.

“Ye-es,” drawled Ham. “There’s nothing like a good wash—to bring the dirt to the surface.”

“You’re very cynical in your remarks,” laughed Jo Guilford. “That shows that you are hungry. I’m going to ring the first bell for luncheon. Be sure you feed him well, Effie.”

There was great excitement at that luncheon table—not over the washing. No, little things like that are but incidents, the seconds that are ticked off by the clock and are never noticed. It was an event of the hour that was to occur that afternoon that keyed them all to top notch.

“Who do you think will be elected chairman?” asked Martha Wheeler, who sat opposite Pegs Whiting.

“I haven’t the least idea,” replied Pegs. “But I think we’ll have to get a rather active person. We’ll need some one with plenty of ‘pep’ to defend our interests.”

“Indeed we do,” put in Ida Bradley on her left.

"The Freshmen aren't getting a ghost of a show anywhere. We're just bound down by tradition."

"And then those Sophomores—" began Spice Becker, in a loud voice. But she stopped short. Jo Guilford was bringing in another platter of cold roast beef.

"Don't let me interfere," said Jo, setting down the platter in front of Miss Cooke. "You don't have to mind me one bit."

But they did not go on and Pegs steered the conversation back again to the Freshman elections.

"I think Ruth Hammond will just about do for Chairman. She's great, and at present the best known. The office is only temporary anyhow. After Christmas we choose the regular officers."

"Ruth Hammond is awfully pretty," remarked Thara Thara. "She's in my Latin class and I love to sit and watch her—pink and white with lovely soft light hair. All she needs is a Dutch costume and wooden shoes, and a lovely old wind-mill in the background. She'd be perfect."

"Gracious! 'Perfect,' maybe! But it sounds rather stupid to me," remarked Spice.

"Thara has the artistic temperament," said the Senior, Lou Gaylord. "It's just the picture she conjured up in her mind's eye. As a matter of fact, Miss Hammond has been well spoken of by the upper classmen."

"Upper classmen again!" sighed Spice. "Well, I won't vote for her, just—"

"Don't talk nonsense," said Pegs. "You ought to see her play tennis! Like a bird. And she's in my

Math division. There's no telling what's behind that forehead until you've heard her recite. She comes from Alabama."

"I think I'll vote for Pegs Whiting." was Mary Hubbard who drawled out that remark.

"Another county heard from," burst out Spice Becker, looking down at her roommate.

"So shall I," voted Thara Thara.

"Now, please, please," cried the nominee, "let's concentrate on somebody worth while. Now Ruth Hammond is a wonderful girl. She's just what she looks like. She's quiet, but effective."

"She has a wonderful profile," again remarked Thara.

"You little hero worshipper!" said the Senior-opposite.

The class meeting was called for four o'clock, and by quarter of four the Freshmen commenced to arrive in groups that almost filled the big Assembly Hall at the top of Founder's Building. In the front seats sat two or three Juniors, one of them their old friend Abbie Foster, who was Junior Class President. When the room was almost full and the Freshmen seemed all to have come, she rose and took her place at the speaker's stand on the little platform.

She made a speech to the Freshmen, a little talk about Class ideals and College spirit, always being careful to stress the thought of the College good rather than the Class supremacy. But, too, she went on to remind them never to overlook the fact that they were of the famous odd-year classes, and that the Navy

Blue and White had been carried on to glory in almost every instance by the famous departed Seniors of 1919. Now, they, the Juniors, were doing what they could. Soon it would be up to the Freshmen to show their mettle.

Briefly she outlined the custom of Freshmen elections, appointed a temporary secretary and tellers, and asked for nominations for Chairman.

Julia Talbot was on her feet in a moment.

"I nominate Miss P-P—Margaret Whiting."

Pegs claimed the floor.

"I'm sorry, Madam Chairman," she said, coloring, "but I must decline the nomination."

"But, why?" asked the astonished Junior President.

"Why—because I've decided whom I'm going to vote for, and it's not myself," she said dryly.

There was a laugh all around, and many protested. But Pegs carried her point and nominated Ruth Hammond, to the obvious satisfaction of the general group. Pegs' discussion of candidates being so entirely naïve and out of place disarranged the order of procedure so that the nominations were immediately closed and Ruth Hammond unanimously elected.

The handsome doll-like girl from Alabama was the blushing recipient of a volley of vociferous "Rahs" led by Pegs Whiting, and then she was formally presented with a beautiful bunch of white roses, tied with wide navy blue streamers, from the Junior Class. The Freshmen were all surprised and thrilled, the bouquet having been kept hidden in a little anteroom until now.

Florence Sherwood was elected temporary Secretary, and Pegs Whiting (who did not demur this time)

to the chairmanship of the Executive Committee. Acting with her were Helen Betts, a popular and energetic girl from the dormitories, Marie Billington who represented the group at Anderson house and Olga Ritter, a western girl.

These girls were to carry on the business of the Class until the permanent elections after Christmas.

Ruth Hammond took the chair at once and was most satisfactory. She went efficiently through the memorandum sheet handed her by the Junior President, and Constitution Committee, Motto Committee, Cheer Committee, and what not, were soon appointed. Lastly she read a little note from the Seniors inviting them as a class to attend the Senior-Freshman reception to take place in Student-Alumnæ Hall on Tuesday evening, two weeks from the preceding day. The Freshmen accepted delightedly as a class and as individuals fell to thinking about their evening dresses.

"Is there any further business to come before the meeting?" asked the new Chairman, who was certainly good to look at, standing there in her crisp white dress, her clear blue eyes solemnly surveying the girls assembled before her.

"Madam Chairman," again it was Pegs Whiting who claimed the floor, "I move that we fittingly celebrate our organization by a Freshman party to-night."

The motion was at once seconded by a Freshman in a far corner of the room, and was carried with a buzz of delight.

"What'll we do? What are we going to do?" was queried.

"We don't know yet," answered Pegs, who seemed

to have the "party" she had mothered on her hands as her responsibility. "But we'll do something. Everybody meet in back of Founder's Hall at 7.30 to-night."

It was mail time when the Freshmen streamed down from Assembly Hall, into the post office. There were already crowds of girls there, but it seemed odd that the Sophomores should be so especially prevalent. Broad mysterious grins met them on every side. What was it? And what were the Sophomores doing around there in bulk, so to speak. They had had no class meeting. It was the generally unobservant Mary Hubbard who pulled Pegs aside to a corner.

"Isn't that Grace Gamby talking to Jo Guilford over there by the book-shop door?" she whispered.

"It surely is," said Pegs Whiting, stopping in the act of opening a letter from home. "She's the girl who tried to faze us at the railroad station last week when we arrived."

"Say, Pegs," it was Spice Becker with Julia Talbot who approached, "what does Jo Guilford want to be talking with those Sophomores for?"

"Well, she's a Sophomore, too," was the quick reply. "Can't she talk to her own class?"

They didn't like it, however, and when finally Jo Guilford departed, with her own mail and Miss Cooke's, the Sophomores were seen to accompany her. The Journey's Enders looked after them at a distance. Had they been within hearing distance, they might have been still more puzzled and interested.

"Now, Miss Guilford," Grace Gamby was saying,

as they went across the back Campus, "we're going to depend on you."

"You're going to do nothing of the sort," was Jo Guilford's emphatic rejoinder.

"You know what the girls voted."

"They can vote all they want to. They are not the Sophomore Class."

"Haven't you any class spirit?"

"Plenty; but I have a conscience, too."

"What rot! You must have been brought up by a minister's family."

"I was."

Martha Wheeler was seen approaching from Journey's End and the Sophomores turned back, and let Jo Guilford go on alone.

"We're coming to see you to-night," called Grace Gamby after her.

"I'll be working in the Library," replied Jo crisply.

The Sophomores went back, striking on through the grove. In this way they avoided Pegs and the others who were returning from the post office.

"Why weren't you at class meeting, Martha Wheeler?" demanded Pegs as they came upon her.

"I was shampooing my hair," replied Martha, evidently considering that a sufficient reason to justify her absence.

"This was our first class meeting and an important one," from Pegs. "You could have shampooed this morning."

"Oh—well—I can't help it. Have you any mail for me?"

“Yes, but you don’t deserve it. You don’t even ask who was elected class chairman.—But, girls, you go on home. Please tell Miss Cooke I may be late to dinner. We have to have a meeting of the Executive Committee to plan for to-night. Be sure you’re all back of Founder’s Hall at 7.30.”

“What’s up?” asked Martha, who was turning back with the others.

“Freshman celebration.”

“Oh, and are the Sophomores having something, too?” asked Martha, showing now considerable interest. Pegs stopped short to listen as Martha went on, “I heard a bunch of them, who cut through the grove just as you people came up, say to Jo Guilford, ‘We’re coming to see you to-night.’”

“Well, I wonder!—Never mind, you go on home. I’ll see you later,” and Pegs Whiting left them.

They were coming out of the dining room, dinner over, when she returned, hot and out of breath, but looking very well satisfied.

“Well, what is it to be?” asked Louise Gaylord.

“Oh, a grand time!”

“A secret?”

“Rather. Freshmen to meet in half an hour.” And Pegs hastened to her room to repair the ravages of a hard afternoon and to change to a clean white dress.

She was still dressing when the girls began to saunter forth. She called after them, going to the head of the stairs, hair brush in hand.

“Better go up and lock your rooms,” she told them, “and take the keys with you.”

They stared at her, uncomprehending.

"They say the Sophomores are planning to visit the Freshmen's rooms to-night. We may as well be prepared."

"Suppose some of us stay home," suggested Thara.

"No, every Freshman is wanted. And I wouldn't give them the satisfaction."

So, after locking doors, they left with not a few misgivings.

There was one other precaution taken after they had all left. Jo Guilford had just wiped the last glass and hung the dish-towels on the rack.

"Effie," she said, "you had better lock up everything, and don't let any one in. Some of the Sophomores are planning to visit here to-night and they may do something to the Freshman rooms, if they can get in. I'm going to the Library in a little while. So be sure to lock the front door and don't let a soul in."

CHAPTER IV

SOPHOMORE ALARUMS

A SILENT, mysterious throng marched down from Founder's Hall to the President's House, and at a sign from one of the leaders, they began to sing the College song. This was followed with the cheer:

“Rah! Rah! Rah!
Rah! Rah! Rah!
Rah! Rah! Rah!
President Hartley!
President Hartley!
President Hartley!”

President Hartley was neither startled nor affronted. She had not been President of Hampden College so many years in vain. She knew the workings of the undergraduate mind, both in groups and individually, and especially did she have a soft spot in her heart for the Freshman, so full of hopes, so fated for many a knock and disappointment. The door opened, and she appeared on the veranda of the big house with a smile on her lips and in her eyes. At her side was a big brown and white collie dog, which insisted on coming out with her. Of course, the girls at once hushed to a silence. They hoped she would make a speech. She did.

“I am glad to see you all out here to-night, getting

better acquainted, just after your organization meeting and elections. I am sure your choice reflects great credit on you all," and Miss Hartley cast a smiling glance at the handsome quaint soft-haired girl in white who stood in the circle of the veranda light, having been pushed to the van of the Freshmen forces by her energetic mates. "You are the largest Freshman class we have ever had, and I am sure you will compare well with every class that has gone before. You are certainly enthusiastic and energetic, but I want you to be just as enthusiastic for your College as you are for your class, and I hope you will always be as energetic in work as in play. Remember that every single act of yours will reflect credit—or otherwise—upon you yourself and upon your College. That means all of us, your classmates, your instructors, those who have gone before. For this beautiful spot in this circle of New England mountains is alive with the hearts and souls of all of you; it feels and dreams and loves. . . ."

She paused as she looked down upon the mass of girls before her. Only the crunching of feet on the gravel path could be heard and the rustling of a cool breeze through the trees, and beyond in the meadow the song of crickets.

President Hartley drew her black lace scarf closer about her shoulders as she felt the chill of the evening. She recovered with a little start from her reverie.

"Girls of 1923, great times are upon us. You have come in the hours of readjustment, the reaching after new ideals, new standards of accomplishment. Great

is your opportunity; great is your individual responsibility. We wish you all success."

They gave nine RaHS more for President Hartley, in which the collie joined with vigorous short barks to their great delight. Then, to prove at once that it was not all Class spirit that actuated them, but that they could do as well for their College, they spelled out Hampden's name musically, as the negro does "Chicken."

"H—am de way to begin,
 A—am de next letter in,
 M—it am de third,
 P—just to season the word!
 D—dat's just to fill in,
 E—am next to the end,
 H—A—M—P—D—E—N!
 Dat's the way to spell Hampden!"

They retired from the College President's house, going from hall to hall, to cheer and sing. Then they lighted "red fire" and were altogether gay. The upper classmen in the halls and dormitories applauded and cheered back, the Juniors and Seniors, who were able to stop their work or willing to interrupt their social pursuits at the moment, putting their heads out of lighted upper story windows to greet the newcomers. The Freshmen continued to sing "Three cheers for '23!" and spelled "Hampden" and Rah'ed immeasurably, while a trail of red light marked their progress from spot to spot.

But what was this? The fire was now trailing down toward the Lake, reflecting through the leafy arches of the double row of trees that marked the road down the hill on one side of the quadrangle of

Pageant Field. Down this way the dark irregular throng threaded. They crossed the bridge. They were now strung out along the path that led up Greenview Hill back of Mirror Lake.

At the top of the hill in a big open space there were lights flitting here and there—and men! There have to be men occasionally to do the rough labor, even in the land of the “Princess.” These were men connected with the College, busily piling up wood and logs of all sorts, supervised by no less a person than Mr. Byron, whose big bulk and fine old face could just be recognized by the light of the lantern he carried. The leaders went up to him, one of the College’s most beloved of characters, and thanked him for his assistance and the logs he had furnished, after the College President had given permission, and the College superintendent had been interviewed, and the College engineer had been telephoned to, and the assistant engineer had been routed from his supper, and Mr. Riordan and Ham Simpson and Josh Lloyd had been persuaded to leave their comfortable boxes in Mr. Simpson’s stable!

“There’ll soon be light enough,” said Mr. Byron, brushing an imagined fly from one of his great ears. “We’re all ready now. Who touches her off?”

“Miss Hammond; she’s our Class Chairman, Mr. Byron.”

“Glad to know you, Miss Hammond. You look just like one of my granddaughters at Hampden Falls. Where’s the box of matches, Josh?”

Ruth Hammond “touched her off,” and while “she” flickered undecidedly to finally burst forth into a mellow blaze, the throng that circled the spot raised to

the star-littered sky above the catch that Thara Thara had written a week before.

“Three cheers for '23!
The Class of the brave and the free!
With her banner of blue before her,
Three cheers for '23!”

They sang and cheered, while the dark groves of pines and cedars that bordered the clearing sent back garbled echoes and the great bell on Founder's Hall boomed across the Campus and Lake, telling the hour of nine. They took hold of hands and danced in concentric circles that went dizzily round the bonfire in opposite directions.

And then were speeches—of course there were speeches!—and when Ruth Hammond unfurled to their enthusiastic gaze the piece of navy blue bunting that had been cut into a triangular pennant and hastily stitched, at five minutes before the twelfth hour, with the white numerals 1923, the singing throng of Freshmen cheered and cheered with a volume of sound that must have carried clear on to Mars.

“And that's the banner,” went on Ruth Hammond, “that's going to be our lodestar during the next four years. The Class that left it to us made it a banner of which to be proud, and it is our duty to keep it so. Now let's give nine more Rahs for 1923!”

Then they forced Pegs Whiting to the front, and she was really embarrassed.

“I can't make speeches,” said she,—“not impromptu ones—unless I prepare them way ahead—but I just want to say this: I don't know what our motto is going

to be, but it should be something like this—'Our flag never goes back!' The Class of 1919 put it forward with simply great records. We will have to keep those records up. They were an all-round athletic class and won every hockey game in the whole four years! And that's what we must do. All of you who are athletic, join the Athletic Association at once. It's a precedent that the inter-class hockey games should be played in the fall. That cuts out the Freshmen. Everything is precedent. But if we want it badly enough, we can make them change the time so as to give us a better chance. And we can make those changes only through the Athletic Association. I talk about athletics because that's what I know most about.

"But we want to go in for everything we possibly can. Don't just sit and grind. The professors will see to it that we keep our work up. But we want to be an all-round class like 1919. We want to join Professor Howard's choir if our voices are up to it. He's going to begin recruiting at once, and from what I hear, it ought to be just the other way about—we ought to fall all over ourselves for the privilege of taking one of the empty places.

"And there are lots of other things, the Dramatic Club, the Y. W. C. A. and—and the Executive Committee wants me to tell you—don't be backward about coming forward!"

The speech ended in a resounding laugh of appreciation and many a resolution was taken then and there not to be a "grind."

And when the lighted face of the clock on Founder's Hall, which they could just see in the distance, reg-

istered 9.40 and when the men had set up the last log in the fire and Mr. Byron had been forced to make a good-night speech which was to the effect that "ladies were always good for sore eyes," he headed the procession down hill again, with his arm chivalrously given to Ruth Hammond, singing in his best Sunday go-to-meeting voice,

"Good-night, ladies,
Good-night, ladies,
Good-night, ladies,
We're going to leave you now!"

The refrain was taken up all along the line of descent by happy, buoyant Freshmen who were very much satisfied with themselves. It was quite dark. The red fire was long since spent, and the bonfire had been carefully extinguished even down to the last tiny spark. The only living lights were the reflections in the Lake of bright dormitory windows and the face of the clock which now and then showed through the trees as they passed—and, yes, Mr. Byron's lantern which he had given to a group to carry down the hill and to show the path.

The Journey's Enders called good-night to their friends and struck through the grove, still humming "Good-night, ladies." When they came to the house, they found the front door locked and had to ring the bell. Effie answered and opened the door for them.

"Why all locked up so early?" asked Pegs Whiting as they went inside.

"Well, you see," replied Effie, "there was nobody in the house and there were some Sophomores who came

and said they wanted to call on Miss Guilford."

"Oh, I clean forgot about the Sophomores!" exclaimed Pegs Whiting. "Did you let them in?"

"I did not. Miss Guilford told me she was going to work in the Library and I told them so. But they were very insistent. I must have hurt their feelings, for I locked the door after them."

"They were here for no good purpose, all right, all right. But we had our own rooms locked, too, and what with the front door shut, we were surely safe."

"Well, of all things!" It was Spice Becker's high-pitched voice coming from above stairs. "Did you ever! Will you look here!"

Pegs Whiting was up two steps at a time. Spice had just turned on the light—on such a scene! Couches, mattresses, pillows, chairs, bedding—all had been "stacked" as though ready for moving. Pictures had either been taken down or turned face to the wall—nothing was where or as it had been.

"That comes from leaving my scatterbrained roommate to lock the room door," cried Spice Becker disgustedly.

"I'm awfully sorry!" said Mary Hubbard in her plaintive voice. "You sent me up for your cape and I forgot to lock it again. I remember locking it the first time."

"But how did it happen?" queried Pegs. "Effie says she locked up the house and let no one in. She says some Sophomores were here to visit Jo Guilford—"

"I know they were," from Spice. "View the results."

"I can't understand it. They did not come in."

"I can. You don't have to have Sophomores come in from the outside when one of them lives in the house."

"But Jo was at the Library all evening."

"The Library closes at nine. She came in before we did. Isn't she in her room this minute?"

"I suppose so.—Well, our room was locked, any way. I suppose we're safe." Pegs opened the door and started to enter the dark room. Her speech was cut short by her bumping into a rocking chair. She fumbled to find a match on her desk, but numerous things seemed to be in the way. At last she found a match. "Oh, girls, come here! Isn't this the wildest you ever saw!"

"Ye gods!" exclaimed the dignified Thara, as they all rushed in.

For there in the center of the room in a rocking chair reposed some pillows, that had been decked in Pegs' kimono and dusting cap. Across the lap of the fictitious lady lay a sign

"Too fresh am I
And spoiled to boot—
Yet awfully young
And rather cute!
No doubt I'll learn
And grow to suit.
To suit—to suit—to suit—
To suit the Sophomore!"

Pegs and Thara sat down on the bare springs of a couch and laughed in each other's arms till they wept.

"You got it, Pegs dear, didn't you? I wonder who it could have been. Probably that Grace Gamby you

answered back that first day. She said she'd even up."

Yes, on the other side of the sign, clipped to it with a common ordinary clip, was Miss Gamby's carefully engraved card, with this scrawl at the bottom: "Only not alone!"

Alarms came from other two rooms which had been left unlocked. The other Freshmen came crowding round to view and to condole.

"You ought to see Julia's room, Pegs," said Martha Wheeler. "It's a sight!"

"That comes from not taking warning to lock the doors.—But then ours was locked."

"They must have gone out on the piazza roof from Spice's room," suggested Ida Bradley.

"That's possible. But how did they get in in the first place? Effie was downstairs all the while."

"Well, as I said before," insisted Spice, "there is a Sophomore living in the house."

"That's nonsense. She wouldn't. What did Jo Guilford say? Did she see any of the rooms?"

"Yes," answered Martha Wheeler, "mine! I called her in right away. She seemed terribly fussed and angry—for her. You know she appears so cold-blooded and reserved, so you can't tell what's inside of her or if she feels anything.—She said she was very sorry. She is helping Julia and Fanny straighten out their room."

"I don't believe—" began Spice Becker.

"Spice," cried Pegs, with fire in her eye, "I think I wouldn't say anything more if I were you. A girl that straightens out this mess is certainly a friend, and not the one who did it."

“Oh, well, you ought to know. Anyhow, you have direct evidence as to who hazed you! You saw her talking to those Sophomores.”

“Yes—” They hung on her words.

“But I heard her say, when I passed them on the Campus—I remember now,” interrupted Martha Wheeler. “She said, ‘I have a conscience!’ ”

“And then?”

“Grace Gamby said they would be over to visit her to-night. She replied very shortly: ‘I’m going to be working in the Library all evening!’ ”

“Good old sport!” from Pegs.

“M—m!” from Spice. “But how did they get in?”

“I think I have the solution.”

It was Mary Hubbard who startled them from a seat on the window sill, where she had been gazing up at the stars as if the upset concerned her not at all.

“Jo Guilford had nothing to do with it. The Grace Gamby crowd never came inside the front door—”

“Spin on, Sphinx,” from Pegs.

“They came up over the piazza roof. They climbed the piazza.”

“But how could they?”

“It’s easy enough. Anybody could do it. They got into our rooms and then went on upstairs to the rooms that were unlocked.”

“A Sherlock Holmes!” cried Julia. “A Sherlock Holmes come to judgment!”

CHAPTER V

JUST EVENTS

THE days moved on and events with them. The girls became so busy with the things of the day that they scarcely had time to describe them in their home letters. The feeling whose mention was taboo hardly had a chance to manifest itself.

The date of the Senior-Freshman reception drew near. The individual invitations were out and Pegs was decidedly pleased to be invited by the very popular Louise Gaylord, for the Sophomore gibe at her expense had rankled a bit. This helped though, as Louise Gaylord was decidedly one of the biggest and most important girls of the College, as well as the best beloved at Journey's End. But, as there were many more Freshmen than Seniors in the College, many Seniors had to take two of the younger girls, and so Louise asked Thara, too.

Louise had made good—a rather short, plump girl from Michigan, with a fine, keen mind whose love for poetry and inclination toward literary pursuits with a very real sense of humor, made her an appreciated companion to be vied for. She had been on every literary board throughout her College career and was the president of the important literary society, invitation to which was one of the most prized honors of the whole years of College.

The girls were not in the habit of breaking rules, such as the one about going to bed at ten o'clock, but occasionally there were extenuating circumstances. One of these was a very blue Friday night, following a nerve-racking oral examination in Latin, in which some of them had done themselves far from justice. That night, when ten had struck and the proctor had turned the lights low in the halls, Pegs threw on her kimono and pattered along in stockinged feet to Lou's room, to seek consolation. She found two other Freshmen there—Ida Bradley and Martha Wheeler—ensconced on Lou Gaylord's couch, having come on the same errand, and a minute later they were joined by Julia Talbot, who had, as she said, felt a call to confess and talk over her troubles. The other three girls acknowledged the same call and urge to confession, and the smothered laugh that resulted was very general. They called their meeting "a confidence bee!" Lou kept them there for quite a few minutes, and in the whispered conference that followed each felt consoled and ready to make a more strenuous effort after the scholastic achievements that might be theirs for the trying. Louise Gaylord was a wonderful father confessor and consoler!

The Senior-Freshman reception was the most formal affair of the Freshman year, and for days ahead of time the girls had been frequenting the laundry to press out their graduation dresses of crisp organdy or more elaborate evening gowns. On the day of the big event College wagons could be seen going to the Student-Alumnæ Building laden with palms and ferns from the plant houses and Seniors in their black caps and

gowns hurried there in off moments. These were the girls of the various committees, who, once inside, doffed the venerated and privileged uniform and worked "like Trojans" to decorate the big auditorium and make it ready for the reception.

What a fussing there was, before dinner that night! Final last minute shampoos and borrowing of curling irons! Last manicures, wild searchings for gloves and stockings!

There was a butterfly array of varied colors at the dinner table, the girls all eager and bright and happy. Pegs looked particularly well in her blue charmeuse with slippers and stockings in a contrasting shade of bronze. Thara wore corn yellow and was pretty as an old fashioned miniature. Spice gave every evidence of mature beauty in a black, demurely cut, lace frock, slightly old for her, but very becoming.

There was a dignified line of couples and trios crossing the Campus at a little before eight, carefully enfolded in scarfs and capes. The Seniors were escorting their proud Freshmen to the reception, talking shyly and politely to each other, in the manner of folks on such occasions.

The dignified trio consisting of Louise Gaylord, Pegs Whiting and Sarah Thayer were no exception to the general rule of formality that pervaded the atmosphere. It was as if these girls so used to one another in middies and kimonos, had to get to know one another anew in their more formal frocks and gowns.

"Did you have your voices tried for the vesper choir to-day?" asked Louise.

"Yes, we went," replied Pegs. "And Thara—Professor Howard took her in a jiffy!"

"Isn't that fine!"

"I'm so glad, Louise, I don't know what to do," said Thara.

"You ought to have seen Professor Howard—how he cocked his ear when he heard her voice!"

"Pegs! Don't!"

"A soprano like yours, dear child, is always a treasure," said Lou. "I'm glad you're in. It is such fine training. I enjoy it tremendously myself."

"We can go together to rehearsals, can't we, Louise?" said Thara, looking at the Senior worshipingly.

"Now don't forget me," said Pegs. "I belong, too."

"You!" exclaimed Lou. "I didn't know you had a voice."

"Neither did I," laughed Pegs. "I can sing like a square piano! I think Professor Howard took me on the echo of Thara's. But he *did* take me."

"Why, I'm so glad!" said Louise Gaylord. "Congratulations!"

"Thank you. I can imagine Mother and Dad when they get the news. Why, Mother'd sooner have that than if I had gotten a whole row of A's in my work. She insists she likes a girl to have charm and the old-fashioned accomplishments!"

"She's right in a way. Some girls at College are apt to forget the importance of those things."

"Journey's End has again been lucky. Martha and Fanny are in, too," added Thara. "They're awfully happy over it."

They had arrived at the great stone porticoes of Student-Alumnæ Hall. The ponderous doors swung open upon a fairy scene—a scene ablaze with light and color, gay with bright dresses and flowers, buzzing with talk and merry-hearted laughter, fragrant with the scent of perfume and roses. There were palms and ferns in cozy nooks, with easy chairs amongst them, and above, fastened in the fumed oak railing of the balcony, the Senior and Freshman colors, streamers of blue and yellow bunting, intertwined.

The airy music of a stringed orchestra, almost hidden behind a mass of palms, pervaded the auditorium, interwove itself with the talk and laughter, and was one with the fragrance of the flowers.

There were introductions and again introductions, and a constant buzz of “Miss ——, do you know Miss ——?” while near the foot of the stage was the reception committee composed of the Senior Class officers and finally President Hartley at the head. Ruth Hammond did the honors of introducing the Freshmen to the Senior officers. “Running the gauntlet” they called it, but it had to be done.

President Hartley had a smile and a word of individual welcome for every one. All the breeding, charm and courtesy that made this gentlewoman so outstanding a personality among her fellow-workers was used that night to bring a sense of well-being to the most shy and awkward of the Freshman throng. That beautiful smile of hers was remembered as the high light of the entire evening.

After the reception proper there was dancing, and many of the girls took this opportunity to “swap”

partners and so become still further acquainted.

And finally came refreshments—is any affair perfect without refreshments? And the word “eats” is especially dear to the Freshman heart. Frappé and cakes were served between dance numbers, and, too, there were tiny sandwiches with all sorts of intriguing fillings, and olives and candy and tiny, tiny cups of coffee, so tiny that no one need fear resultant insomnia!

Let it not be thought that the Freshmen went through the evening without misgivings. Although there was a tradition that Freshmen were to be left unmolested by the Sophomores on the night of the Senior reception, feeling had been running high between the two classes, for not only Journey's End had been “roughhoused” that night of the bonfire, but other Freshman rooms in both dormitories and cottages. So there had been much open speculation as to probable Sophomore conduct. The Seniors had sent a special message to the Sophomores, that acquiescence in the tradition of the College was expected of them, and that they were to leave the Freshmen alone.

But would they do it? The Freshmen had had their doubts and had taken precautions.

But the Class of 1922 always did the unexpected. When the final good-nights had been sung, together with “Auld Lang Syne,” to orchestra accompaniment, and the girls had put on their wraps, and gone out happily, but thoughtfully, into the night and home to realities, and when they had unlocked their doors and turned on the lights—everything was as they had left it!

The Sophomores seemed to have given up any idea

of troubling them again. But a certain group, headed by the irrepressible Grace Gamby, seemed striving to create a sort of reign of terror of the mind. They considered the action of the Freshmen in seeking to have the interclass hockey match changed from late autumn to spring exceedingly "fresh" and unprecedented, and when the Athletic Association voted for the change as reasonable, their annoyance knew no bounds, for all of which some of them were inclined to hold the Journey's Enders chiefly responsible.

Mountain Day came the week after, when the crisp October air had turned the leaves. Mount Havelock had decked itself gorgeously in a many hued mantle of crimson and russet and gold. All the College turned out for one final tramp, following the road up the Mountain, sticks in hand, sweaters slung over shoulders, each clinging to the ever-present box luncheon that shows man's humbleness and kinship to the common earth.

But above—up there from the top of the earth—reached by breath-taking climbs, the glories of the mountains were a hundred fold. Peaks rose on peaks, frowning with barren rocks or plumed with nodding trees. Below, the tree-tops of a lower level spread a carpet of many colors and glorious design, such as the hand of the Almighty alone knows how to weave. And beyond spread the surrounding country, with its thin, threading roads, its tiny white steeples and miniature houses, and specks moving slowly along which proved to be men. To the left, the squares of harvest fields, green and yellow and brown, like the patches of a quilt; to the right, the silvery band of a smooth,

silent river, that made its way between banks of purple and crimson and gold.

It was a day of freedom for the College girls. They breathed lungfuls of living air, they toiled up rocky, forbidding peaks, they lolled on the grassy slopes, and dreamed and saw visions in the far landscapes—and they ate. And when they finally moved down at the close of the day and went home in the falling twilight, trudging the dusty roads and singing as they went, they were a bit weary, a bit foot-sore—but, oh, how enormously happy!

Two weeks later the sword of Damocles fell. The Grace Gamby group of Sophomores had been holding the thread.

Now, College is not one big frolic after another. It is work and work and work, and a vast acquaintance with the inside of recitation rooms and laboratories. It means hours of research in the big, silent Library and much delving into commonplace Latin and Math books to the limit of waking hours. The frolics are only the high lights, the tonics that buoy the nerves to the serious and real work.

It was now the last day of a glorious October, the end of a perfect month. It was Halloween. Looked forward to? Yes, and made ready for. The whole College planned to celebrate in the way it loved best—by masquerading.

The Journey's Enders had been especially busy, for they had decided to represent the Mad Tea Party from "Alice in Wonderland." Such a planning and making ready as there was, such a plying of scissors and paste and pins on ephemeral costumes of crêpe paper and

muslins. The efforts interrupted by recitations were renewed with vigor at the close of the work day, and at four-thirty to-day every thought of study was dropped.

Effie was likewise busy, for Miss Cooke was preparing a special dinner for the occasion, and Jo Guilford, her hair streaming into her eyes from her efforts, was helping in every way that she could. As soon as possible she, too, dropped her apron and hurried to her room to "dress up."

The girls came trooping at the bell summons, and were soon ranged round the festive board: Thara, in a blond wig, made a sweet, innocent Alice; Spice was the Hatter in a fifty-year-old suit of Mr. Noah Simpson's and stove-pipe hat. Pegs was the March Hare, with beautiful white felt ears flapping. They made a pillow of Mary Hubbard, who was the meek little Dormouse.

And the others came as Kings and Queens and Knaves from the famous pack of cards, and Potatoes and Cabbages to represent the democracy of "Cabbages and Kings."

In the center, threatening to behead everybody at each mouthful, sat the Queen of Hearts, in no less a person than Miss Cooke, whom the Potato behind her, Jo Guilford, had helped dress and adorn in crêpe paper crown and garments with borders. Opposite her sat the King of Hearts, Louise Gaylord, who strove to pacify the Queen and to make her see reason.

They chattered of unintelligent nothings and looked wise, and they vied with each other at inventing nonsense. They made Julia recite the "Jabberwok" and

offered a flood of nonsense rhymes between courses.

After dinner Alice, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the King and Queen of Hearts and the Vegetables, together with the Cards of sorts, retired to the barn to duck for apples and cast molten lead and apple-parings, and to look for their fate in a mirror. They ducked and melted lead and looked with gales of delighted laughter and thrills of hair-raising apprehension. Thara Thara was sure she saw a light-haired young man, but Pegs, who was peeping over her shoulder into the mirror, too, was sure it was Buff, Miss Cooke's yellow Angora cat.

"It's no fun telling fortunes in a nice quiet barn like this," said Spice Becker. "The ghosts don't come in here. We ought to go down by the cemetery, put water in our mouths, and go along and go along, and the first name we hear will be the name of the man we are going to marry."

"Thanks," replied Pegs. "All marry the same man?"

"Silly! Of course not; we put water in our mouths one at a time."

"Well, I'd rather stay here," said Thara, who was already satisfied, having seen her Fate.

"You're afraid," said Spice.

"We're not, either," retorted Pegs. "I'll go, if you will."

"So will I," ventured Thara, backing up her roommate a little tremulously.

"And so will I," piped up Mary Hubbard.

Spice, of course, had to go and Julia Talbot and two or three others joined them, bringing along a

pitcher filled with water. They put on wraps, leaving their costumes on the foyer window seat. Miss Cooke had excused herself and gone.

It was a pitch-black night, with a gray dull blanket of clouds that hid away moon and stars and threatened rain, and the chilly gusts that now and then stirred the dead leaves in the roadsides were not pleasant.

Nine o'clock struck as they started up the road in mysterious Indian file. Here and there still flitted village children whom you could discern by their pumpkin jack-o'-lanterns. And as they passed the carriage drive at the side of the house the intent Freshmen might have noticed three white-sheeted figures loitering at the opposite corner, consulting deeply.

"They say they are going to do the cemetery stunt," said one to another.

"My, but they're brave. Let's give them a run for their money."

"Where, here?"

"No, up there. There's a short cut back of Deacon Chase's house."

"Are you game?"

"I—I'm not afraid, if you aren't."

"Let's."

Three figures were soon lost in the darkness, as they crossed the corner of the Campus toward Main Street.

The Freshmen, who had started with giggles and brave jokes, hushed themselves to whispers as they progressed up the road and left the friendly lights of Main Street behind them. Beyond in the gusty

night could just be discerned the white-stoned village of the dead.

“Spice, you first,” they said, handing her the pitcher. They were starting up the narrow path through the headstones and monuments.

“I’d just as soon,” she said, but her hands, as she took the pitcher, trembled.

She filled her mouth and went on a few steps. There was a giggle behind her, but it was a nervous one. Ahead was a white mound with a white headstone. Why she was staring at this, she did not know. She was shaking.

Suddenly a name sounded out of the empty nothing: “Jehoshaphat!”

The girls clung to one another, wondering which one of them had spoken it.

“Jehoshaphat!”

“I come!” cried a hoarse audible whisper ahead. The white mound before them seemed to rise up— It did! It actually rose and was extending yearning arms—

They dropped the water pitcher and turned back, helter skelter, treading on one another’s heels. Spice Becker was choking over the mouthful of water that had gone down the wrong way.

“Wait for me!” she cried, her heart in her mouth.

“Jehoshaphat!” The long drawn out sigh still pervaded the burying ground.

The girls did not wait on any order of going, but took turns in leading the retreat home. And never before had those friendly portals seemed so good to them.

In the foyer hall a low fire was burning, having been lighted by Miss Cooke earlier in the evening. Before this they dropped, panting, to regain their flagging courage.

Miss Cooke came in, with Buff under her arm, and found them giggling nervously, not daring to look at one another for shame and perplexity. They told her the story.

"It may have been the College ghost," ended Pegs, recovering herself.

"It has been known to walk," said Miss Cooke, and with a laughing good-night she turned into her own apartment.

CHAPTER VI

THE GHOST WALKS

THERE was no sitting up to study that night. As the chill of the dying fire fell upon the silent group, they one by one shook that creepy feeling from them and went off to bed. The last three, Pegs, Thara Thara and Mary Hubbard, went off together, turning out the electric light in the hall, where now there was a dull glow from the last embers crumbling into ashes.

"Well," whispered Mary, as they parted at her door, "I shall dream about it all night."

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed Spice Becker. "I hope you won't do any such thing. You've been talking and screaming enough in your sleep of late, with your Latin prose and your 'Intiger Vitae.' If you wake me to-night, I shall jump on you like two ton of brick, young lady."

"Well, I'll try not to do it," 'plained Mary, "only these are extenuating circumstances."

"I suppose these are—ex—ex—tenuating circumstances—" For Spice knew her roommate well enough by this time to be sorry for her.

"Spice, dear," said Mary, "if I do dream, it'll be worse for me than for you."

"That must have been a bad dream you had last night, Mary," said Pegs. "Was that you who was

making the night hideous with your cries? I woke up with a chilly creep. Was it you that screamed?"

"I expect it was, Pegs," said Spice Becker, showing her white teeth. "Mary was dreaming about my shoe."

"Your shoe?"

"Yes," drawled Mary, flushing but appreciative. "I was dreaming that Spice's big shoe lay on the floor beside my couch—there, look in—just the way it is now. Spice always flings her shoe, you know, if I drop one word after ten. But this time it was her shoe that was talking to me. My hair just stood on end as I looked at it, and I said, 'Why, I didn't know that you could talk!' And it grinned at me just like Spice and said: 'Talk! of course I can talk; I have a tongue!'"

"Isn't that the brightest thing you ever heard Mary say? My dear, you should always be asleep."

"And then it lolled and wagged its tongue so uncannily and grinned, that I just screamed."

"Of all things!" said Pegs. "And what happened next?"

"Spice was shaking me and I woke up."

"Well, I was scared stiff," said Spice. "I thought that she had seen ghosts. But I am up to her tricks now, and I will put her on the piazza roof to-night, if she so much as peeps! Good-night." And she went in.

"Good-night," from the other two.

"Oh, and—Pegs," put in Mary, her head lingering half out her door, "did you get that money order cashed?"

"Yes, thanks."

"Be sure to hide the money."

"I will—in my shoe!" And the doors were shut.

Pegs did not fall asleep to-night the instant that her head touched the pillow. For a long time she lay there, looking through the gloom at the vague square of a picture frame on the wall opposite her, that was illuminated by the shining of a street lamp through the open window. And she thought of home, and mostly of Dad. The last thing she remembered was the clock on Founder's Hall striking twenty-four—was it the echo as the strokes glanced off Chemistry Hall, or was it her brain? Her thoughts began to get jumbled up and she dozed off.

It seemed only a few minutes that her eyes were shut, when suddenly something made them fly open again—a shadow passed between her and the light. What was it? A fancy of the night. No, a board creaked and creaked again—that was no fancy.

As her senses began to return she could catch the measured breathing of her roommate from the other couch. That shadow was not her roommate—but it was a shadow, and at the window.

Summoning up her courage, she pushed back the bedclothes and went to the window. A breeze wafted the little side curtains into her face. Outside across the dark piazza roof that single street lamp beamed into the still darkness. The only sound was the breathing of the night wind through the trees.

No, there was something else. There was a sound of stealthy feet on the gravel path on the Campus be-

yond the apple-tree gate. And then her eyes began to discern a something in the darkness—a white something that contrasted with the night, that moved back and forth like a restless spirit in prayer—The Ghost! The College Ghost!

Her hair seemed to rise, cold waves crept over her forehead and her tongue choked her! At last she recovered some presence of mind.

“Sarah!” she called. “Wake up! Sarah!”

“What—what is the matter?” came from the corner.

“Wake up,” said Pegs, running to her and catching her shoulder. “Come to the window and see.”

But when they stood at the window, their heads together in the opening between the curtains, there was nothing, no white shadow moved below. Only the night, and the breeze, and the single lamp across the expanse of the piazza roof.

“I think you were dreaming, Pegs,” whispered Sarah.

“I don’t know,” replied Pegs tremulously, running her hand over her eyes. “If I was, I took a long time to dream it.”

When the rising bell rang next morning, Pegs opened her eyes and looked first of all to the window. It was natural enough in broad daylight. And then outside—as she put on her bathrobe and slippers and pulled down the sash—there was nothing strange or mysterious or spooky. The sun gleamed back from the white gravel path where IT had marched its vigil. An assistant from the chemistry department was now

walking up the path toward Science Hall, and Rags, the dog hound of Tommy Hughes, next door, was dancing delightedly around her footsteps or chasing to retrieve a mythical stick.

Only one thing she saw that she hadn't noticed before. Right in front of her window was a white square something—the wash cloth of Julia Talbot, upstairs, she thought, hung up to dry and blown down by the wind. She raised the window and took it in. It was not a wash cloth.

“What is it?” asked Sarah. “Was that your ghost?”

“No, it's a handkerchief,” replied Pegs. “And here is the name inked on it—‘Josephine Guilford.’ Well, how did it get here?”

“What is that in the corner, Pegs?” asked Thara.

“That?—Why, it's chewing gum. This handkerchief is never Jo's. You know how she abhors it.”

“Well, even so—” argued Sarah. “Maybe it was dropped by your ghost.”

“The ghost down in the path?”

“But you said you felt a shadow pass in front of the window.”

“Yes, there was a shadow, but it was up here.”

And Pegs' brow wrinkled in thought.

“But this won't do. Hurry, let's dress. I'll have to go to town to-day to see about that suit,” and she began to run the water in the basin in their closet.

“You got your money order cashed, didn't you?”

“Yes, though a hundred doesn't go very far these days.” And towel in hand she went over to her chiffonier and pulled out her pocketbook.

"What's the matter, Pegs?" from her roommate, as a queer look stole over the other's face.

"It was so bulky—my pocketbook—and now—"

The clasps were open.

"The money—it's not here!"

"Gone?"

"Yes, you remember my putting it there the last thing last night."

"I certainly do. Look in the drawer."

And Thara paused in combing her long black hair, and, comb in hand, and hair streaming down her back, she went over to where her roommate was starting to rummage among her handkerchiefs and neckwear and miscellaneous articles. But that drawer was ransacked and emptied and each thing picked out individually to no avail.

"Look below; it might have fallen into the drawer below."

But there, too, was nothing, nor in the drawer still further down.

"Well, let's look through mine now," suggested Thara.

"Why, what for, Thara? I certainly put it here."

"Well, that money was no hallucination," said the other. "But you never can tell. Come, let's go through it."

"Girl, dear, I don't distrust you."

"I know you don't—but, honey, come on."

The breakfast bell found them still rummaging and disheveled—but without success.

"I'm sorry, Pegs. I'll lend you some money until you find it,"

"Thanks, dear, but I don't think that I ever shall. I guess I may as well give up my trip to town to-day."

A loud knocking came on their door.

"Wake up, sleepy heads! What have you locked yourselves in for?"

"Is it locked?" And Thara pulled her kimono closer around her and opened the door. "I remember now, it was that ghost scare last night. So I locked the door when we went to bed."

"Why," exclaimed Spice Becker, "are you still undressed? You're as bad as Mary. I can't wake her up.—What's the matter?"

"Pegs' money is gone." And they closed the door and began to whisper her the story.

"Well, it looks like an inside affair. Are you sure the money didn't drop out before you put the pocket-book in?"

"Sure as sure! It was inside of this pocket which locks—see how hard it is to open. And Thara saw me put it in before we turned the light out. It couldn't have dropped out."

"And your door was locked?"

"Yes, you saw that yourself.—Unless that ghost—"

"What ghost? Not the cemetery ghost. That—that was a joke.—But come, dress yourselves. You're already late for breakfast. Tell me afterwards. I'm hungry as a bear and I like things hot.—Give my roommate a poke, if she's still sleeping when you come down. Look at her," as Spice threw her door open, "making believe she doesn't hear.—Wake up, I say!—Goodness, look at the mud all over the bedspread! I do believe she went to bed with her shoes on!"

"Say nothing about the money to the other girls, Spice," cautioned Pegs.

"I'll keep still. Don't worry."

But think as they would, and search as they would, the day passed and no trace of the money could be found. The three girls said nothing, but as the day wore on, they became more and more perplexed. Dinner found them all pre-occupied, until the Senior-opposite broke the silence that had settled over the table, where the girls were mainly occupied with eating.

"Have any more ghosts strolled in from the cemetery, Jo?"

"I don't know," replied the Sophomore. "I was too busy shopping in town to-day."

"Why, you've bought yourself a new serge dress! How pretty!"

Pegs and Thara looked across at Jo with interest. She had been looking so shabby lately.

"It's about time," said Jo. "I expected any day to fall apart like the 'one-horse shay.'"

"Mrs. Muller did a good piece of work, Josephine," remarked Miss Cooke, disposing of a piece of bread. "It's a very pretty dress."

"But did anybody see any ghosts last night, besides the cemetery ones?" persisted the Senior. "They say at Potter Hall they heard queer sounds long past midnight, and somebody was seen going down to the boat-house."

"A rather sporty ghost," declared Miss Cooke. "It must have been the watchman."

"Oh, do let's finish dinner first," pleaded Mary.

“Didn’t we have enough ghosts in the cemetery last night?” And she looked troubled and apprehensive.

“I think Mary is right,” put in Jo. “It’s only one night in the year when ghosts walk, so let them rest in peace to-night.”

“Well, Jo,” said Spice Becker, “since you take up the cudgels for the ghosts, too, I suppose we’ll have to stop.”

Mary, who had followed the conversation of now one, now another, drew a sigh of relief. “I don’t like to talk of ghosts, because I saw one last night.”

“Saw one!” Pegs and Thara leaned beyond their next neighbors to look at her.

“Well, I didn’t really see one—it was all a dream. There was hay and loose boards around, and I think wind and mud.—Nasty!”

“Mary, dear,” laughed Spice. “That was a dream! There *was* hay around, but it was oozing out of your head.”

“Cicely,” admonished Miss Cooke. “That was a rather unpleasant dream, Mary.”

“No, I really liked it then, because I went—and I went—and I went. And I had hardly any clothes on!”

A howl came from the entire dining room.

“That’s usually the way,” laughed Senior Louise, “but I didn’t think you’d be quite so absent-minded.”

But when they rose from the table and went, arms about one another’s shoulders, to stand around the fireplace in the hall, Spice took Pegs aside.

“I think that ghost walked off with your money.”

“What do you mean?”

“Jo has a new dress—the first she ever had for ages, I should say,” she whispered to Pegs, with a strange look in her eyes.

“Yes, it is very pretty.”

“It is.”

CHAPTER VII

SUSPICIONS

ANOTHER day passed. There were no further developments and no discoveries. The girls kept their secret well to themselves and Pegs decided to do without her new winter suit. She did not know what to think. It was Spice Becker, who was not the least concerned in the affair, financially, that agitated and tried to convert her to a theory of her own.

Spice, who was a snob at heart, had never cared for Jo Guilford. She could never imagine associating with a girl who came from so obscure a source as a farm in Galesport, Maine, and who had strength and will enough to work her way through college, by helping to cook and wash dishes in Miss Cooke's kitchen and keeping the public rooms of the house well-ordered generally. Jo did do all that, and earned even enough to send some money back home to help run a now rather diminutive farm.

No, Spice craved society of her "own standing." She begrudged Pegs to Thara Thara and had no use for the absent-minded creature that had been allotted her—Mary Hubbard. She thought of her roommate as a very near relative of the old lady who went to the cupboard to get her poor dog a bone, and was so foolish as to have forgotten that really she had thrown it into the garbage pail the day before. Poor dog!

But most of all, her wrath of mind had been expended on that poor Sophomore upstairs, and especially since her assumption that the latter was in a conspiracy with the whole Sophomore class to "do" any misguided Freshman—let us add, like herself, who needed "doing."

So Spice always had her head next to Pegs' and kept whispering in her ear.

"I think," said Spice, as the three were lolling the next night among the pillows on the couches in Pegs' room, "that we ought to tell Miss Cooke."

"That is my opinion, too," said Thara. "She ought to know that something has been stolen here—if it has been stolen. But I should hate to go on and tell her—"

"What you think," completed Spice.

"No, what *you* think!" exclaimed Pegs. "And I think you're all off!"

"Yes? Didn't Jo help you get that money order cashed? Yes, and how did Jo Guilford's handkerchief get around the front of the house? It didn't float out of any of our windows. You know Jo is seldom invited into *our* room."

"All the better for her, I think. Well, she's invited into our room, anyway."

"But she hasn't been here lately, Pegs."

"No, she hasn't. But somebody may have taken her handkerchief by mistake."

"It didn't drop from upstairs," said Spice. "I inquired."

"Well, then, Miss Sherlock Holmes, how do you account for the chewing-gum? Jo never chews gum!"

“Oh,” Spice shrugged her shoulders, “and we thought she would never *steal*.”

Pegs arose in exasperation and pulled her coat off a hanger in the closet.

“You can sit here and talk if you like, but I am not going to stay and listen to it. I’m going to the Library. If that handkerchief had anything to do with my hundred dollars, it wasn’t Jo that was using it as a gum receptacle.”

And she flung out of the room.

“Well,” said Pegs, as she returned from the Library somewhat later, pulling off her rubbers and dropping her coat on the couch, “I’m sure Jo didn’t do that!”

“Do what?” asked Sarah, raising her head from the Geometry she was working over.

“Why, steal my—”

A knock came on the door. It was Spice Becker.

“Oh, hullo, Pegs. I’ve been looking for you to get your superior knowledge on pulse and fever.”

“What do you mean?”

“Why, Mary Hubbard has a cold and she looks so dreadfully! Miss Cooke is with her now, dosing her up—with chicken remedies, I suppose.”

“Now, see here, Spice—Miss Cooke is mighty good to come and look after Mary, and she’s been mighty good to you and to the rest of us. None of your spice on her!”

“Oh, well, I meant nothing. I’m sure if anybody wants to nurse Mary Hubbard with a cold, they are

welcome to do it." She dropped down next to Pegs' coat. "Have you discovered anything yet?"

"Not a thing."

"I should certainly investigate Jo Guilford. You notice how prosperous she's looking these days. She even is getting some fat on."

"She's been working very hard. That's where the money comes from. Besides, she eats Miss Cooke's meals—no wonder she's gaining. It seems to me what *you* put on isn't so little."

"My waist needs four inches to button in the front. See—I have to wear a scarf down the front to cover it."

The others smiled at the makeshift.

"The funniest thing about it is—do you remember, when our rooms were raided that the persons who did it climbed up from the roof of the piazza?"

"That is so—only you thought it was Jo all the time, and she was inside the house."

"Well, this was practically the same thing—Pegs, I think it's your duty to tell Miss Cooke now. She ought to be told, anyway, if things are taken at her house. And you have a perfectly good clew in that handkerchief."

"Well, perhaps I ought to tell her—but if you breathe a word about Jo, I'll eat you alive!"

A knock on the door cut short further argument. It was Miss Cooke.

"I think Mary will be comfortable to-night," she said. "I put a mustard plaster on her chest and gave her some medicine and a good hot drink of ginger.

I left some tablets for her. She has a frightful cough and a high temperature. Wherever she got it, I don't know. Doesn't she dress warmly enough?"

"She *bundles*. She dresses too much. I can't make out where she can get a cold."

"I'll be up again to see her. Don't let her get uncovered." And Miss Cooke put her hand on the knob of the door.

"Miss Cooke—" hesitated Pegs. "We were just talking about you and I have something to tell you."

"Why, yes," and Miss Cooke came further into the room. "What is it?"

"I'll—I'll have to tell you that—that some money disappeared from my room night before last."

"Yes?"

"It was stolen," put in Spice.

"I—I don't know," went on Pegs. "It was like this—" and she told the incident as it happened, omitting only all reference to the handkerchief.

"How dreadful, girls! Why haven't you told me all this before?"

"We didn't like to," replied Pegs. "And then, I thought maybe I just lost it."

"But we thought we had better tell you," put in Spice.

"It was very peculiar indeed. It looks like a real theft. And yet who would climb up on the piazza roof and know just where to put his hand on the money?"

"That's just it, Miss Cooke," put in Spice, "it was somebody who knew!"

"What do you mean?" Miss Cooke, who had

thrown herself into an easy chair, sat up erect in it and looked at the girl squarely.

“Why—why—”

“What is it, Margaret?” Miss Cooke turned to Pegs, who, startled by her formal name, almost jumped.

“Oh, Miss Cooke—why—”

“We have some ideas about it,” said Spice, recovering herself.

“What are they?”

“You see—there were several people in the house who knew about the money order.”

“You three girls, of course—”

“Yes—” Spice colored involuntarily, “and some others. Yes, I knew, and Mary Hubbard, and—and—Jo Guilford helped Pegs cash the money order because the postmaster knew her.”

“Well?—If you have anything to say, it is better to tell me than to keep a suspicion to yourselves which might be unfounded.”

“There was a handkerchief I found on the piazza roof next morning,” went on Pegs, “and it had a name on it.”

“Is that all?—Might not the handkerchief have floated out or have been blown down?”

“Yes,” persisted Spice, “but the whole row of coincidences—”

“What are they?”

“The girl we suspect knew all about the money and—and—she is not so very well off. And right after that she has bought herself clothes and things she really can't afford.”

Miss Cooke readjusted the spectacles on the bridge of her nose. "What—was the name on the handkerchief?"

There was a dead silence. Only Sarah, who had given up her study and let her Geometry lie idle in her lap, now began to turn pages.

"What was the name?"

"Josephine Guilford."

For a few moments nobody spoke. Then Miss Cooke broke the silence, smiling a peaked smile which had a glint of anger in it:

"I expected you to say that, after your preface. Josephine Guilford works from morning till night. If you girls worked as hard as she does, instead of just spending your fathers' money, you'd know the value of it." She arose to go.

"But—but—Miss Cooke," broke in Pegs, very much agitated.

"I will ask you to please keep this whole thing to yourselves. Do not let any of the others know."

"But—but—Miss Cooke," cried Pegs, "I—I don't think it was Jo who did it!"

Miss Cooke paused with her hand on the knob of the door.

"What makes you think it wasn't?"

"Why—there was a piece of chewing-gum in the corner of the handkerchief—and I know Jo Guilford never chews."

"S-sssss!" Miss Cooke tittered a peculiar kind of titter. "You are very funny!"

CHAPTER VIII

“FLU” SPRITES AND OTHERS

MARY HUBBARD was never cut out to be famous, and if somebody had told her that she would be, Mary might have jumped to the moon and the other girls would have thought the informant insane. But the fact still remained—Mary had become famous—for Mary was the first person at the college to have the “Flu.”

Next day when the Chapel bell was ringing, Miss Cooke went up to see how she was getting on. Spice Becker was fussing around, looking for buttons that had come off her waist which must be sewed on at this eleventh and a half-th hour. Mary was all flushed and headachy, and didn't care.

“Now, I'm sure I had those four buttons on the ‘chiff,’” she complained. “I suppose you brushed them off as usual.”

“I haven't been near the ‘chiff,’ dear,” drawled a weak voice from the rumpled couch. “Maybe they are on the floor.”

“Maybe they are,” and Spice dropped to her knees and ducked her head down to look under the chiffonier. “Oh, dear, there goes the Chapel bell tolling. I suppose I must cut Chapel, and they will know I cut.—Come.” This to the knock that sounded on the door.—“Oh, Miss Cooke!”—She got up, breathless, brush-

ing the dust off her skirt, and tucking back loose waves of hair from her flushed face.

"How is little Mary this morning?" asked Miss Cooke, going over to the sick girl.

"Oh, all right, I guess," said Mary weakly.

"Which means all wrong. What is the matter? Do your bones still ache? My, and you do have fever! Didn't you take the cold tablets I left you last night?"

"I certainly did, four of them, just as you told me to."

"She certainly *was* getting up all night," put in her selfish roommate, not thinking that perhaps it might have been her own duty to get up and administer them.

"Then I don't see why your fever hasn't gone down." Miss Cooke went over to the chiffonier. "Here's the box—I left you eight—why, my dear child, they are still here! Eight!"

"But I did take them, Miss Cooke, I took four of them, faithfully."

"You took *four*," burst out Spice. "Where did you get them, if not from the box?"

"Why, no—no—let me think—they were just in a bunch on the chiffonier."

Spice collapsed on the other couch, covering her face with her hands.

"Why, what is the matter?" asked Miss Cooke. She did not know whether the sound which Spice emitted through her fingers was a sob or a laugh. "What is it?"

"My buttons!" choked Spice. "Mary swallowed my buttons!"

“What do you mean?” cried the good lady, looking from one to the other. Light began to dawn on Mary.

“Why, I—I’m sorry,” she stammered.

“So am I,” said Spice.

“Will it—will it hurt?”

It was some time before Miss Cooke could get the explanation, and when Spice finally flung out of the room for the nine o’clock recitation, her waist front pinned up with a series of college pins, she still sat in the wicker chair, too overcome to think.

“Why, I think you had better take some castor oil, dear,” she told Mary. “I don’t think *then* they can hurt. You should take a dose of castor oil in any case. I will fix it so that you will never notice it. And I will telephone for Dr. Woods to come around. Oh, yes! Oh, yes! I’m afraid you have the grippe.”

And Miss Cooke who yet had to look after certain water growths for her laboratory, and her chickens, and the meals that Effie was getting ready for the girls, still found time to ring up the doctor’s office and ask her to come over as soon as possible.

It did not take long for Dr. Woods to diagnose the case; the doctor’s thermometer told her that, the headache and the aching bones told her, the patient’s attitude, the growing cough and running of the eyes.

“I am afraid you have the grippe, my dear,” she concluded, dropping the hot wrist she had been holding. “I’m afraid you have.”

“But—but you don’t think I have the ‘Flu,’” pleaded the girl. “I should die if I did.”

“That would not be at all necessary,” smiled the

doctor over her glasses. "Oh, no, it is not influenza at all—just the grippe. But we will have to be careful just the same. I think you ought to be over at the Barton Infirmary, where you can be better taken care of."

"Oh, dear!—and—and I swallowed four pearl buttons."

The confession struck Dr. Woods like an avalanche of insanity.

"Swallowed buttons—I don't understand why."

Miss Cooke laughed and explained that Mary had no ostrich propensities and Dr. Woods laughed, when she heard the story, till the tears came from her eyes and she had to wipe her glasses.

"Well, the castor oil was a wise step. You must never take anything, Miss Hubbard, without first looking at it and at the label."

When the girls came home for lunch there was no Mary there. Dr. Woods had bundled her up very warmly and had her wheeled down to the Infirmary, which was close by, at a time when the North Campus was quite deserted, during recitations. Only her couch, airing, marked her place; only the curtains flapping in the chill breeze from the wide open windows.

For Dr. Woods was taking no chances. Influenza was going through the country-side again, and the College authorities must ward it off. She did not say that Mary Hubbard had influenza, as she thought it best not to. But Rumor, that Latin deity, that flings through the country with her head in the clouds and

her feet on nothing stable, was going about on the Campus telling everybody that Mary Hubbard, that queer Freshman, was so sick with the “Flu” that in her delirium she had swallowed a dozen buttons off her roommate’s waist!

But the girls at Journey’s End lost no sleep over Mary. Only Jo Guilford went over twice to inquire at the Infirmary. The news that she brought over to Miss Cooke was that the Freshman had a very high fever, but she was being put under a process of “sweating” and should be better to-morrow.

Jo Guilford was pretty much by herself these days. She began to feel a certain insidious chilliness creeping between herself and the rest of the girls. She knew not how to account for it, but it was there. Was it because she was a Sophomore? Doubtless that had started it. Was it because she was working her way through College? It was not that, either. For the friendliness that had begun to come when they had realized that a girl who works for her college education is as good as one who doesn’t, and that, after all, class distinction was nonsense, had all thinned out again to unresponsive offishness.

So she went about her work silently, or when she found time, took solitary tramps over the now hardened roads, away out where the mountains lay barren under a sullen November sky and the fields were seared by the frost. Only the gray sky overhead, hard ground underneath, and God. No pestering or annoying spirits—it was good to be alone!

The girls had been warned by Miss Cooke not to

tell of the loss of Pegs' money to the others, but although Pegs generally kept silent, Spice, true to her name and fame, had managed to spread the tale pretty well.

Even Louise Gaylord had been tainted, for one night after ten, when Pegs, sore at heart with the complications, crept to her room for advice, she found Louise rather cold on the subject.

"But, Lou," whispered Pegs, "this is an awful thing to accuse a girl of without proper evidence—just because a catty person believes it and insists—and it's a terrible thing to have on my soul. I don't believe Jo ever did it!"

"I don't know," said Lou uncertainly. "Spice seems very certain."

"What does she know, the little cat? She simply lives next door to me!—I think I shall go and see Jo Guilford and tell her what I believe."

"I should do nothing of the sort! Nobody has told her anything now; she doesn't know. And you know Miss Cooke told you to say nothing to anybody about it. Let sleeping dogs lie."

"I know, Lou, but everybody else knows except Jo, who is most interested. I'm going to tell her—"

"Let well enough alone," said Lou decidedly.

And Pegs, being only a Freshman, with a ticklish subject on her hands, took Senior advice and remained silent.

Jo now was quite certain of the chilliness between her and the girls. But what was the cause of it?

One day she found out. She was in the pantry alcove, which communicated with the dining room by a

set of china shelves, where glass windows on one side and hardwood doors on the other divided the dining room from the kitchen. It was eleven o'clock, and Jo had no recitations that period. She was putting away some cups and saucers she had been drying, when, as she opened the hardwood doors, voices in the dining room reached her ear.

“I should think she would be ashamed to put on such a bold front.” It was Spice. “I would not have Jo Guilford in the house, if I were Miss Cooke.”

Her heart went to her throat! What was it? Her forehead broke into a cold perspiration. She scorned to be an eavesdropper, but this meant much to her.

“She certainly took it. A hundred dollars means a good deal to a girl like that, I suppose.”

Jo almost dropped the cup she had held poised to listen. She remembered now. She had heard something about something being stolen and now she knew what it was and that she was suspected. Suspected!

“What is it, dear,” came the soft voice of Effie behind her. “You look so upset. What has happened?”

For, through it all, Effie, the cook, had always been a steadfast friend and admirer. From her she was always sure of sympathy.

“Oh, Effie!” wept Jo, her cold reserve breaking down completely. “Oh, Effie!” But she only put her arms around the woman's neck and wept on her shoulder.

“Can't I do something?” asked Effie. “Tell me what's the matter.” And she led the girl to a chair near the window.

“No, Effie—not now. I have to think first. It's

too terrible. I—I must go up and lie down. Can you take care of the lunch alone?"

And she went to her little bedroom under the eaves, and threw herself on her couch. She heard the dinner bell ring for luncheon, and the girls trooping down. She heard the clock on Founder's Hall strike two, and heard faintly the electric bells in Science Hall call for the first recitation. She was due at the Chemistry laboratory that afternoon. But for once the work would have to go on without her.

Suspected! *She* suspected! All afternoon that word rankled in her heart. What must she do? Should she not go to Pegs and deny it? Of what good denial? Besides, Pegs had seemed especially uncomfortable when Jo was around and had shifted her gaze when their eyes met. She thought of going to Louise Gaylord, the Senior-opposite. But she remembered now that she had seen her whispered to in corners, or in the depths of her darkened room after 10 o'clock. Oh, the bitterness of it all!

She would go to Miss Cooke. *She* would certainly believe her.

A knock came from the door. Jo was too dazed at first to respond, or even to realize that there had been a knock. But, as it was repeated, she came confusedly to her feet, brushed back her ruffled hair, and went to the door.

It was Miss Cooke.

"I just thought I'd come up and see the girl," she said. "Effie told me you weren't feeling well."

Effie, faithful Effie, always mindful of her welfare!

"Oh, I was just a little upset, Miss Cooke," said

the girl, embarrassed. “Something—something happened—” She could not keep back the tears.

“Come over to your couch, dear. There, sit down next to me—now tell me.”

And in that motherly embrace, the story, as much as she knew of it, came out.

“You know—you know, Miss Cooke, I never did it!”

“Of course I know you didn’t,” and Miss Cooke kissed the flushed, tear-wet face, and pushed back the wet, draggled hair. “I would not let it trouble me for a minute.”

“But they say I did. I can’t face them and have them keep on thinking it!”

“No, something must be done—but I must think.”

“It will be hard to prove the negative,” put in Jo, wiping her eyes and beginning to look at the thing practically and judicially. “I can’t just say I didn’t do it and expect them to believe it.—They can come up here and search if they like.”

“They shall do no such thing,” exclaimed Miss Cooke. “It is absurd! I believe in my girl—only—we will have to wait, perhaps. Something will surely turn up and prove they were wrong. Just don’t worry. Only don’t let them see that you know. Come, dear, just wash yourself and go and take a good walk. There’s an hour yet before dark, and Rags is crazy to take a walk with you. Don’t think anything more about it. I’ll do something.”

Poor Jo! Her heart was burned to the sear, so that a numbness took possession of it. Her soul was so torn, that it no longer had any feeling. She did

not want to see the girls again—she certainly could not face them to-night. She only wanted the power to think—to think clearly and soberly.

Jo did not go down to dinner that night, but crept out the back way when all were eating and chattering. She walked, walked—where, she neither knew nor cared. Her Guardian Angel was guiding her feet—down by the plant houses, across the brook, where the water rushed over the little dam, up, up the winding road to the top of Greenview Hill. The chill breeze fanned her face, but her heart was chillier; the lights from the dormitories glowed upon the night and rippled with the waters of the Lake. In the houses, she knew, they were chattering and happy. They had no problems, no aches, no heart burns. But what to do she could not think—could not think!

After a while, she found herself down again—how long it was, she did not know. She was going up the hilly path to the left of Pageant Field, between the double row of now bare trees. Across from Founder's Hall she heard the sound of the organ and instinctively her feet went toward it.

Who was playing at this hour? It was the young assistant organist, practicing for a recital. There was something familiar in the strains, but something intangible. He was playing from "Freischutz" of Ober. That little hymn-like section was pouring out of the opened windows in back of the Chapel and singing upon the still, lamp-lighted, empty Campus. He was playing from "Freischutz," but she heard only a familiar little hymn; the words it brought were the message her soul had been seeking:

“My Jesus, as Thou wilt,
 Oh, may Thy will be mine!
 Into Thy hand of life
 I would my all resign.
 Through sorrow or through joy
 Conduct me as Thine own,
 And help me still to say,
 ‘My Lord, Thy will be done!’”

That sigh was the pent-up bitterness going out of her. Her heart was strangely free, for she had received a message of patience. She would wait, yes, and suffer, if it had to be—even as He had suffered.

Miss Cooke was true to her word. The next Saturday night Effie and Jo were washing the dinner dishes and the girls with Miss Cooke were gathered around the fireplace in the hall. It was the weekly prayer meeting and Sarah Thayer was leading it. Her subject was “Kindness.” She was nervous through the hymn, more so at the chapter of the New Testament which she read, and her voice fairly faltered when she came to her little sermon.

It was about the kindness we owe to others around us and so often forget—the kindness we might do but omit—the kindness which every one of us at some time needs—the kindness which even Christ needed at the end, the comfort of a friend.

Through the breathless pause that followed Miss Cooke spoke in a soft voice.

“Sarah is right,” she said, stroking the fond yellow Angora that had insisted upon getting into her lap and making himself part of the meeting. “Sarah is right. We too often forget—we too often jump at conclusions, where, if we allowed in just a little bit of Chris-

tian Spirit—we would see our way—so clearly, by its light. We might use a little kindness now.”—The big Angora raised his eyes and gazed lovingly into her face. “There is a matter of which I asked some of you not to speak—in this house—it is about a certain girl. Some of you had jumped at conclusions—I am sure very wrongly. I had asked you to wait and keep it to yourselves. But it is no longer a secret. And I don’t know how much farther it has gone. But the mischief has been done. Now you all know what I mean. But I want to tell you that the thing you impute to Josephine is absolutely unfounded. You know it is, don’t you?”

There was silence, their troubled eyes gazed into the fire, where a few sticks of apple boughs were burning fitfully.

“At any rate, I beg of you, even as the dear mother of each of you at home might, never to speak of it among yourselves again. You have done a grave wrong—almost irreparable. One day it will be proved to you. Your dear mothers would be heartbroken.—You will be going home for Thanksgiving, next week, those of you that live near, and I want you to be able to look at your mothers with a clear conscience. Wait—the thing will be proved to you. And God’s ways are many.”

The silence that followed was broken only by the crackling of the fire, and the measured ringing of the bell on Founder’s Hall, striking eight o’clock.

“Let us all sing for closing,” Miss Cooke broke the silence, “that old, old hymn you all know—‘One sweetly solemn thought.’”

And one by one they found their voices and joined furtively in the old revival tune:

“One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er,
I'm one day nearer home to-day
Than e'er I've been before.”

And little by little a double meaning of it came to this homesick, sentimental little group, waiting for their first homecoming, and they smiled through their gathering tears.

“Nearer my Father's house
Where stately mansions be,
Nearer to-day the great white throne,
Nearer the crystal sea.”

CHAPTER IX

QUARANTINED

WHAT the College authorities feared had happened. They were not in favor of the girls' going home for Thanksgiving, because of the increasing danger of influenza; but the public sentiment amongst the students clamored for the traditional two-day home-going, and the College Faculty had to give in—with reservations. All students wishing to go home had to report to the Faculty head of the house in which they lived, to be cross-examined most rigidly, first, as to whether they showed any signs of influenza, second, as to whether any one at home had a cold or a sniff, or their neighbor or their neighbor's dog. If there was an honest, cross-your-heart negative, the students received permission to go—with cautions and admonitions.

Dr. Woods also made a set of "Do's and Don'ts" for the home-goers to follow implicitly, which President Hartley read in Chapel that Tuesday morning before the exodus. Even with such careful discrimination, nearly two-thirds of the college drifted away to the railroad station as soon as their recitations were over, leaving the rest to enjoy Thanksgiving at College. And they did!

On Thanksgiving Day, Mary Hubbard who had now been in the hospital three weeks was allowed to go back to Miss Cooke's where her mother and father had come

to spend Thanksgiving with her. Sarah Thayer had stayed, Jo Guilford and five other girls.

And such a dinner!—Turkey stuffed to bursting with raisins and chestnuts, dumplings, potatoes, vegetables, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, hot biscuit—with a march around the dining room to make room for more—ice cream, with caramel sauce, marshmallow layer cake, coffee, nuts, raisins, candy—what did we omit? It was a dinner that could have put Tiny Tim's to the blush.

Then a big log fire in the foyer, and talk, and conundrums, and songs, and popping corn and more raisins to fill any possible crevices. Mr. Hubbard was especially good at telling sea tales and stories of adventure—he had lived in many of the world's odd corners—and Mrs. Hubbard seemed to share with the girls in listening again to her husband's past adventures. He was jolly and rollicking, and seemed to have a bit of the sea's boisterousness; she was quiet and contained and efficient and mild. How came Mary to be their daughter, wondered the girls. Still Mary did have a talent for Latin and Greek and other languages. Perhaps she, too, would be a genius some day! For the father's name was not unknown in the world of letters.

Each house of the College celebrated in its own way, and afterwards, in the late afternoon, there was an organ recital in the Chapel, with the lights turned low, and at the organ that idol of the entire College, Professor Howard. "Largo"—"Traumerei"—The "Pilgrims' Chorus" from Tannhäuser. How the organ responded to his slightest touch and how marvelously

it gave forth the message. It sang through celestial heights, wailed with the outcast spirits of the nethermost round of hell; it fluttered with the breeze, howled with the wrack and thundered with the anger of God! And when the storm had spent itself, came peace, and thanksgiving, and hope for the morrow.

Friday the girls came back, straggling in to their recitation halls, back to the workaday world, most of them in time for the turkey-hash-on-toast—all that remained to reflect the glories of the day before.

The reunions at Journey's End were characteristic.

"Oh, Thara—Yoo-hoo!" from the path crossing the street to the house, and then a tramping up the piazza steps, a none too gentle banging of the front door, a stumbling up the stairs and Pegs burst into her room, flinging her bag on the couch and herself into her roommate's arms.

"Well!—I've had the bulliest time!"

"So did we—even though we couldn't go home."

"Oh, did you? Tell me what you did—Did you miss your 'ittle roomy?" and so forth, smothered into a hug.

"And what do you think," said Thara after a while, "Mary Hubbard's back, and her father and mother were here—perfectly lovely father—I'm mad about him!"

"Is she all well?"

"Yes, doctor says she is all right and perfectly safe to associate with."

"Well, we're lucky, Sarah, to be so away from everybody. Why, you have no idea of the amount of 'Flu' around at home!"

"Hush! Speak lightly and knock on wood. Dr. Woods is awfully upset and just waiting with fingers crossed. I was in her office this morning before luncheon, and she is worn to a frazzle. She said she had had three calls since the girls began to come back at nine o'clock and they were all 'Flu.'"

"Oh, hello! Why, here's Mary! Hello, Spice!"

"Oh, we're up and about again," said Spice. "Did you just come? I had a nine o'clock recitation; so I had to be here early. Just my luck."

"Did you have a good time, Pegs? You did, didn't you?" asked Mary.

"Oh, bully!—How did you like the Infirmary?"

"Fine! Didn't have to study. And you girls were so lovely to send me that cyclamen. I've brought it home with me to my room. And that monkey-on-a-stick! Where in the world did you get that?"

"That was Pegs' idea," said Thara, "to keep you entertained."

"Well, that was my sole-own companion when I was too sick to see anything but the square of light from the window."

"The monkey made you feel at home, like, didn't it?" put in Spice.

"I'd hardly suggest that to *my* roommate, Spice," shot Pegs subtly, with a laugh.

"You think you're smart, don't you, Miss Funny?" pouted Spice.

"Well, one must live up to one's surroundings.—Oh!" with a start. "What was that?—Oh, of course. Julia's sneeze."

For Julia Talbot had a peculiar sneeze, something

between a start and a scream, as if she had swallowed a tooth or something, that made a person jump, and realize a second later that it *was* a sneeze. In a few minutes the sneeze came again; this time more emphatically.

“Oh, hullo, Julia,” said Pegs, putting her head out of the door. “Don’t you know sneezing is ‘verboten’? Hope you’re really not getting the ‘Flu.’”

“I don’t know—KA-CHOO!” said Julia, who was coming up the stairs. “Better keep away from me, anyhow.” She held her handkerchief in front of her nose. “There’s no knowing—KA-CHOO!”

“No, there isn’t,” nodded Pegs, sympathetically, going inside. “Your nose knows, though.”

But when they trooped down to luncheon a little later, Julia was missing, and so was her roommate.

“Julia is here,” explained Pegs to Miss Cooke, “but I don’t know if Fanny has come. Julia was sneezing—most unusually—not her usual sneeze, I mean. Do you suppose she has the ‘Flu’?”

“We will see in a little while,” said Miss Cooke, looking very thoughtful as she began to serve the cold meat. “I will go up in a few minutes. And, girls, it will be just as well if none of you go to their room just now.”

After she had served all the girls and eaten a little, Miss Cooke excused herself and left the dining room, followed by the anxious glances of those at the table.

There was a subdued silence.

“I hope,” said the Senior-opposite, “that it isn’t a case of influenza.”

"Oh, I hope not," 'plained Mary, "else I'd feel as if I'd given it to her."

"Oh, don't worry, Mary," said Pegs, "if Julia has the 'Flu' she couldn't have gotten it from you anyway? She probably got it going home over Thanksgiving."

"Well, I hope you won't give it to me," said Spice. "You give me the shivers the way you talk in your sleep at night, and I think that's enough for my share."

"Hush, Spice," said Thara. "The 'Flu' is nothing to joke about just now."

Miss Cooke was still upstairs on the top floor when the girls left the table and when they went to classes for the afternoon. Those who occupied rooms on the same floor reported that the door of the front room was closed and that they could hear Miss Cooke walking about and saying something now and then. That was all.

When they returned at four-thirty, however, they found that what they had dreaded was an actuality. Dr. Woods had been there: the two girls had influenza. They were not to go to the Infirmary, as that had already five new cases that day, and the remaining rooms were to be held open for any serious cases that might come up. At present the girls of the top floor front were to be quarantined from the rest of the house and Miss Cooke and Effie would look after them.

When the girls returned from the post office with their mail an hour later, those groups sauntering across the Campus in the dusk were alive with excitement. All sorts of rumors had been whispered about and scraps of news were magnified as they passed from mouth to mouth.

“They say we are to be shut off from everything. We can’t go to the City—not even to the village store!”

“Wow, there go our sodas,” said Pegs.

“Anyway, it’s too cold for sodas!” from Thara.

“Is that so, Miss Pollyanna? We still might enjoy an occasional hot chocolate, after we come from a long walk—and candy—and cookies.”

“Well, it will keep you from spending your money too rashly.”

“Thanks. That’s thoughtful of you.—I have an idea! We’ll signal across the road to Mr. Streeter, using the deaf and dumb language—I wonder if he’s up on deaf and dumb?—and we can send Rags over with a basket tied to his neck.”

“You’re an irrepressible young ’un, Pegs. You’d throw away your money with your hands tied.”

Pegs laughed. What was money for? Too, there seemed to be a limitless amount back home. Who’d ever have to stop to think so long as there was Father?

“What interests me,” she went on, “is how we are to go to recitations? Shall we wear masks?”

“No such luck,” said Spice. “The Faculty would be too afraid they mightn’t know which one was reciting.” They were stumbling up the steps by now. “But that has possibilities. If I thought I might flunk, I could pantomime to you, and you would do the answering for me from behind the mask. Wouldn’t we get Frenchie’s goat!”

“Suppose three voices started up to answer at once,” suggested Thara.

“No danger of that, Thara dear, where you and the

rest of us are concerned. You might have to do the answering for the bunch while the rest practiced silence."

"What would interest me more," said Spice, as they stopped in front of her door, "is, aren't any of the Faculty going to oblige us by having the 'Flu' themselves. I could do without a little Math for a while."

"You're a brute. But maybe they will, if we sit with thumbs down," from Pegs.

The influenza regulations were not so rigorous as they had anticipated. Only eleven students and one Faculty member had it so far and they were promptly isolated. The services of two extra nurses were obtained from the City and these were to visit the patients from time to time, while serious cases were to be taken at once to the Infirmary for constant treatment. The regulations called for an immediate report to the resident physician and prompt isolation of any one developing a cough, cold or sneeze. Chapel would continue just the same, except for those persons. (Oh, how many fictitious "cuts" there could be!) Recitations would continue as usual. Students would not on any consideration be allowed to go to the City or enter a street car, save on special permission. The village store was not quarantined against as yet—glory be!

Next morning the breakfast bell did not ring on time, nor twenty minutes of the time, nor yet half an hour. Those tired beings who promised themselves ten minutes more sleep had a chance to turn over a good many times. It was nearly eight o'clock when a few early birds, all dressed, ventured forth to see—Spice Becker amongst them.

"Is your clock slow?" she asked, putting her head in the kitchen door, backed by Thara.

"No," it was Jo Guilford in a long apron, pulling out a hot pan of muffins from the oven. "Effie is sick, so I am cook this morning. You will have to do without your hot cereal, though. Corn flakes or puffed rice—and jelly with your muffins—and coffee and some bacon. Ring the breakfast bell, please."

When the Freshmen straggled in, with inquiry on their faces, Jo, still in her long white apron, was putting the coffee and muffins and bacon on the table, and Miss Cooke was coming in from her room, hooking up the last hook-and-eye on her dress.

"Effie is sick," Miss Cooke announced, "and Josephine has been so good as to prepare some breakfast at a moment's notice. I'm sorry for this rather makeshift breakfast, with no reflections on Josephine, but I've telephoned to Hampden Falls and hope to have a cook by noon. You see, even Ham forsook us this morning, and we have had to feed our own chickens. His father telephoned in that Ham had the 'Flu.'"

"How perfectly ghastly," commented Spice, "and you will have to feed your own chickens?"

"I can't let them starve," laughed Miss Cooke. "At any rate, until I can get some one in. Old Mr. Dayton may come in, but his back has many aches and his legs are none too steady."

"That's too bad," said Pegs. "Let me help with them, Miss Cooke. I'd love to."

"So should I," volunteered Mary Hubbard.

"No, Mary," said Miss Cooke. "I think you'll have all you can do catching up with your back work.—"

Thank you, Margaret. I may call on you to climb up after eggs. Old Mr. Dayton and I will manage the rest.—There's one thing I want to ask of you girls, though. Do please be very careful and don't catch cold. Be sure to wear hats or caps. It is too risky to go without. Do not go near anybody with a cold and if you feel the least bit ill, let me know at once. There goes the Chapel bell! Is it as late as that?"

CHAPTER X

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

“WELL, of all things!”

Pegs went to Spice Becker's room that evening at the urgent solicitation of Mary Hubbard.

“What is the matter, Spice?”

“Don't bother me,” said Spice, turning over on her couch, her face to the wall. “That idiot had to go and get you, didn't she? Roommates are a nuisance, and especially Mary's kind.”

Mary stood abashed and embarrassed.

“What did I do, Pegs?” she whispered.

“Nothing. Don't say a word.—Spice, dear, do you feel sick?”

“No, I'm tired! I just want to be left alone! Who wouldn't be tired after such a day as we had? Nothing for breakfast—big hunks of cold ham for lunch and gobs of Freshmen's tears—and the dinner to-night!”

“You know Miss Cooke is doing the best she can while Effie is sick. We're not exactly starving, anyway.” Pegs smiled at the memory of the “gobs” served to them. “The cook she got just happens to be used to cooking for gangs of men down at the paper mills, instead of for delicate ladies like us.”

“I wish you'd both go away,” cried Spice, ready

tears spilling from her eyes and soaking into a many-colored pillow.

Spice was completely broken down and wept like a child. Pegs knew the signs and so did Mary, now.

"Has she the 'Flu'?" whispered Mary.

"Don't know, child. Go for Miss Cooke."

That very much distressed lady was combing the silky golden hair of Buff, as a few moments' respite and solace, when Mary burst in upon her.

"Cicely Becker sick?—Why, she was all right this morning."

"Yes, but I guess it just comes suddenly," suggested Mary.

"Well!" she exclaimed, and, depositing the big Angora in a nice soft hollow on her bed, she brushed his yellow hair from her dress and followed.

Miss Cooke, who could head a College department and raise prize chickens at the same time, to say nothing of twenty Freshmen, who could climb up Mount Shasta for specimens, who went on strenuous tramps up the mountains of Norway for her vacation, Miss Cooke was not to be outdone by the sick, pettish Spice Becker. She sent Pegs to telephone for Dr. Woods and then sent both her and Mary away. Spice, who was now trembling like a leaf from chills, allowed herself to be undressed and put to bed.

"I suppose I shall be quarantined now," said Spice peevishly, when Dr. Woods had come and delivered her verdict.

"Without a doubt," said Dr. Woods, taking some tablets out of her case. "This makes four you have now, Miss Cooke?—I don't know what we shall do if

the number increases. I've sent several wires out, but managed to get just two extra nurses. However, the number is still small, I am happy to say, and with a little help from the people in the houses, I think we'll manage to pull through."

"I think you don't need to worry about us, Dr. Woods. I am taking care of Effie in her own room next to mine, myself. But why can't we move Miss Becker in the upstairs front room with the other two girls? We can put her couch up there to-morrow—there is plenty of room. Josephine Guilford's room opens right into the front room. She is taking care of the two girls and she can take care of more just as well."

"Let us hope there won't be many more," said the doctor. "Your suggestion is good, only do take care of Miss Guilford."

"She is a very present help in time of trouble," said Miss Cooke. "I don't know what I would have done without her to-day."

"Do you expect Jo Guilford to look after *me*?" asked Spice Becker. "Well, she doesn't need to. I can take care of myself."

Dr. Woods laughed. "Don't be too sure of that."

And Dr. Woods was right.

For the next day Spice was too sick to raise even her head, much less any objections. Miss Cooke bundled her up closely, and one of the College employees took her up carefully in his arms to the floor above. Pegs, who had the temerity to watch the arrangements at close quarters, in spite of orders to keep away, waved at the departing patient, all the while

wondering how the man could manage it—with Spice's large bulk. But then, thought she, men have their uses and sometimes they have more strength than you give them credit for.

Mary, who had slept in Pegs' room the night before, insisted on staying with Pegs and Thara as long as they could stand her. For she would not sleep alone. The two couches, Pegs' and Thara's, had been put together, and Mary slept "on the crack." Slept, that is, when they at last stopped talking and giggling. But finally, when Pegs and Thara had turned over a few times, and Mary had run away from three or four burglars, the "crack" suddenly widened, and Pegs awoke with a start to catch the last of Mary as she disappeared down the intervening chasm.

"What is it? What is it?" cried Pegs, pulling instinctively at Mary's leg.

"Oh-h-h!" a squeal from Mary. "Let go! Let me go!" And she kicked a regular pinwheel.

"Oh—why, of course—Mary!" and Pegs giggled aloud and "let go."

Thara awoke by this time, and giggled, too, when she had gained her senses, while Mary, having now touched bottom and realized where she was and what it was all about, began to come to the surface, without any assistance from the other two who were laughing themselves into tears.

"You mean things," she complained, "to let me down like that!"

"I am sorry, dear, for our scant hospitality," apologized Pegs. "One can't account for oneself when one is asleep. Now, do climb out and we'll put the couches

together again, spank up against the wall. I think chairs will keep the mattress from sliding on the other side."

And Mary Hubbard was supremely happy.

Two days later another patient went to join the group in the top floor front and to add to Jo's care. But Jo, methodical mind that she was, managed to make the medicine hours of all of them coincide, so that she would have to get up only once every two or three hours. She set her alarm clock, too, to go off at these hours, letting it emit a most subdued ring under her woolen muffler on the wash stand. Hard on the patients? Not at all. They would all have to be awake, anyway, and they might as well be good and awake to know what was expected of them. Regular hospital training in a sense, but not of the sort the sick usually look for.

One of the visiting nurses came round at regular intervals during the day and Miss Cooke persuaded one of the neighbors to bring in her knitting and stay with the girls during the long afternoon. They heard all the town gossip.

There were now twenty-nine cases of influenza at College, two of which had turned into pneumonia. These cases were being most tenderly cared for at the Infirmary, for their friends felt very grave when they thought of Ruth Dicks and Lou Crawford. Their friends made a point of questioning one of the white-gowned nurses at the door of the Infirmary every day, and spreading the news around the dining room of their dormitory at meals.

Otherwise, except for wincing when they heard of

others of their number being added to the sick list, the College in general made quite merry over the "Flu" and its discomforts.

"Not to be sneezed at," became the slogan.

One day in the Freshman Latin Class, they came to a passage of Livy in which the ancient gentleman was starting the Romans on a great expedition.

"'One sneezed,' " was translated.

"'One sneezed,' " said Professor Earl, who herself could not suppress the smile that went contagiously about the room. "Miss Whiting, what is the significance of a sneeze among the ancients?"

Pegs, who had had a far-away expression on her face that made one suspect that the smile was for some distant scene or incident, jumped when she heard her name called.

"I beg pardon?"

"What," repeated Dr. Earl, still smiling, encouragingly, "was sneezing the sign of among the ancients?"

"It—it—" Pegs cast vainly about. She must strive to catch that something that eluded her. "Why, really, it's a bad sign—one of the first symptoms of influenza."

The class "let out one whoop," as Mary Hubbard put it later, much to Pegs' discomfiture. Even Dr. Earl, massive and dignified, as some Roman of old of whom she was always reading and telling, smiled, for dignity does not always mean a corresponding lack of humor.

"That is a rather too modern interpretation. I think, Miss Whiting, it will perhaps be worth your while to investigate the question."

Whereupon it might have been noticed—perhaps it is just as fortunate that it wasn't—that the pencil of Sarah Thayer was busy during the rest of the recitation, although she carefully hid the scraps of paper, the results of her unwonted activities, between the pages of her Livy. It was Mary who discovered them that night when they were "doing" their Latin together, Thara having gotten up to get some cookies from the bookcase, and left the book to Mary.

"What do I see!" exclaimed Mary.

"What do you see?" cried Pegs, snatching the sheets from her. "'Jupiter Fluvius!'—'Jupiter Fluvius?'—Translate, Thara. That means 'Rainy Jupiter,' does it not? Why 'rainy'?"

"No, it doesn't," said Thara, making several ineffectual grabs after her manuscript. "It means 'Sneezing Jupiter.'"

"Ye gods! In not too polite society I have heard of 'Sneezing Jehoshaphat,' but never, never 'Sneezing Jupiter,'" said Pegs gayly.

"We are not unaware of that, my child," said Thara pointedly.

"Oh, hush, let me read these inspired words," cried Mary. "Thara dear, I must see to it that we do not let your light hide under a bushel! Here goes!"

"JUPITER FLUVIUS

"AN HORATIAN ODE

"Jove sneezes—now all the world is full of blooms
 Called forth to life by that propitious sneeze.
 Jove sneezes—nay, but the world rejoiced not—
 For well we know, and well believe—Jove hath the Flu,
 And we rejoice that those celestial heights
 Separate us.

Flee, gods, flee, of that immortal household.
Pandora's box is not so full
As Jove's immediate atmosphere—
Mean, miserly, microscopic germs!
For yet anon, all of ye will sneeze.
O ye Olympian pages, put ye Jove
To bed, give him a draught, deep,
Of unprohibited celestial nectar,
And to his immortal feet
A hot-water bag. Make the Eternal One
Sweat with the Hadean heat
Until the evil is out of him
And Flu away!"

"Oh, Thara, Thara, you marvel!" cried Pegs, hugging her roommate. "Were it not that I appreciate thy genius I would shake thee until thy bones rattled. That 'Flu away' is expressive of thy soul.—But wait. I will get even with you yet."

And next day, a copy of the Ode, made in the dead of night under the dim light in the hall, found itself in the letter box of the *Hampden College News*, was hurried down to the printer just as he was making ready for press, and after much pleading and cajoling, appeared the day after in the College paper, fully and properly signed, for all to read. Prefixed to it was the incident of the "Sneeze" (which Pegs did not submit)—and Pegs, too, received her full meed of credit! At the end was added this editorial comment: "When the silly, curious Pandora let out this mess of Flu germs upon the world, she managed to shut the lid down and retain one germ in her casket. It was the saving grace. The ancients said it was 'Hope.' We think it was a sense of HUMOR!"

CHAPTER XI

THE DISAPPEARANCE

IT was the week before Christmas. Julia Talbot, who on her return from home after Thanksgiving had strung up twenty-five peanuts, to be decapitated one each day until all were eaten, had six left on the string. That was one of the pastimes of the "sick-bay," when they commenced to get over their coughs and aches and pains. Effie, downstairs, got over her illness long before the others—because she had to. She had work to do, that a clumsy successor was carrying on very badly. It was Jo that furnished the more delicate embellishments that made meals worth sitting down to.

Spice Becker was the next to get well, partly because she abhorred the dictation of Jo, to whom she had taken such an unreasonable dislike. For aches were aches and pills and mustard plasters meant getting well. So she got well quickly, with just a wobbly feeling and a general fatigue that would pass away only in time. Her peevishness, however, and those qualities that were forgiven but not loved by her housemates were still quite in evidence.

One thing that worried her, while she was sick, was her worldly possessions left behind on the floor below. She felt sure that Mary would let them "walk away" and she worried that poor mortal so much about them that Mary locked all the drawers of Spice's chiffonier

and wore the key around her neck all day. Perhaps it was her illness that made Spice worry, and the too frequent presence of Jo Guilford.

The first thing that Spice did, therefore, when she finally was able, one afternoon, to take her uncertain steps to her own floor, with her head still soaring in dizzy altitudes, was to make Mary pull out the key from the bosom of her blouse and hand it to her, for a close inspection of her chiffonier.

"The table and the chairs are all here," she commented, "but you should have slept here nights as I wanted you to. I couldn't possibly have put all of my room under my pillow!"

"Well, I think you are very foolish to put anything under your pillow, if I do say so," remarked Mary. "It's perfectly safe. Still I did the best. Your valuables got me so upset, I looked into your bureau last thing before Chapel and first thing when I came home, and last thing at night. And all night long I dreamt of burglars. I hope you'll find everything."

Spice was not paying any attention to this lengthy recital. She was unlocking chiffonier drawers and pulling out one after the other.

"Where did you put my silver comb and brush?" she asked.

"Top drawer," answered Mary promptly. "Right there. Why, they are not there. There's the place for them. I took special care of them because I was in love with them—just."

"Well," said Spice, folding her arms after a further search and excavation among ties and neckwear, "will you please tell me where they are?"

“They were there—in that spot—the last time I looked.”

“This morning?”

“No—no—last night. I knew you were coming down to-day. I hope you don't think I—”

“No, of course not.—This is a pretty how-de-do!”

“I'm sorry. I had the key all the time.”

“A hundred keys don't seem to make any difference. I said that Miss Cooke ought not to have that Jo Guilford in the house.”

“Do you mean—do you mean,” faltered Mary, aghast, “that you think she took it?”

“I don't mean anything—I don't know what I mean—I—”

There was a knock and she looked up, startled, to find some one at the half-open door—some one whom in the fringe of her consciousness she had seen approaching down the hall for some time.

Had she heard? Good heavens, had she? How long had she been standing there? For it was Jo Guilford, Jo who seemed all red and confused. She held out something in her hand.

“You forgot your pills upstairs,” she said. “Be sure to go on taking them regularly.”

“Thanks,” said Spice curtly, deciding precipitously to come to the point. “I have no further need of your pills—nor of you.”

Jo looked her in the eye, steadily, until Spice's eyes shifted. There was confusion on both sides and a boding silence, to the great embarrassment and alarm of Mary.

Jo Guilford had never looked like that before. The

cold, seemingly apathetic front was changed to hot anger and fury. Her face was flushed, her eyes red. She seemed about to speak, but could not find her voice. Then suddenly hot tears fell from her eyes. She turned without a word and fled, swaying once against the wall of the hall as she went up toward her room.

That night, at dinner, Spice Becker got a royal welcome, in which Effie, waiting on the table, joined. Julia Talbot was promised by the doctor for tomorrow. The patients were really getting well, although the cases in the College had been added to by ten.

“What does our nurse think of the prospects of the other two?” asked Miss Cooke, leaning forward to see Jo Guilford. There was a vacant place there now. “Well—where is Josephine—not working in the Library?”

“Miss Josephine did not seem well this afternoon,” volunteered Effie softly, behind Miss Cooke’s chair. “So I hardly expected her to help me with the supper. But I was so busy I didn’t get a chance to go up and see.”

“Well, well—we must see about it!” exclaimed Miss Cooke thoughtfully. “It won’t do to have her sick.”

That ended the matter for a time, and, except a little uneasiness for an impending trouble that one or two of the girls felt, it did not seem to bother the others who got back quickly to their meal and their hilarity, and thought no more of it.

But the meal once over, Miss Cooke made her way to the top floor. She stumbled, for it was dark, ex-

cept for the crack of light coming from under the door of the front room where the patients were. Miss Cooke lighted the gas in the hall, which had been Jo Guilford's duty. She put her head in at the door of the "hospital ward" and said a cheery word to the interned three, who were soon to have their supper brought to them. Then she knocked on Jo's door.

No response.

She opened the door and looked in, but it was dark and silent. The only light came from the kitchen next door, reflected up through the window.

"Josephine," she whispered, "are you ill?" But when she received no answer, she borrowed a match from the invalids' ward and came in again to light the gas.

The room was entirely vacant. Jo was not on her couch as she had expected her to be. Her books were lying on her desk under the light. Flung over a chair was her long white kitchen apron, evidently thrown there after lunch. On the couch lay a pongee waist and a serge skirt Jo had been wearing. On the desk, beside the books, was a small candy box with a slit in the cover, one of Jo's benefactions for the mission-work in Africa. For Jo always felt that, in spite of her own straitened circumstances, the poor heathen were still worse off and deserved all the sympathy in dollars and cents that she could give them.

It was this box that principally held Miss Cooke's attention. Why should it be broken open when Jo always kept it so carefully sealed? Her mind reverted back to the loss of Pegs' hundred dollars—then to Jo—

She went back to the front room. The invalids had

seen nothing of Jo since two o'clock that afternoon when she took away their trays. But they had heard her come up again half an hour later—she lay down, one of the girls thought. After a while they heard her walking about quite a good deal. Julia volunteered that she was sure Jo was pacing the floor, a most unusual thing for her (or any other normal girl, in fact), and she thought that Jo must have a toothache. She meant to get up and ask her what was the matter, but the warmth of the room and the lunch had made her drowsy and she had dozed off.

Miss Cooke did not want to alarm the other girls, but she skillfully made inquiries of the others on that floor and on the floor below. Mary Hubbard was out, preferring to spend a more comfortable evening studying at the Library. But Spice replied for both that they hadn't seen her since about two-thirty.

Miss Cooke was seldom so uneasy. Her interview with Effie availed nothing.

"I don't know where she could have gone, Miss Cooke," said the latter. "Unless she went to the City. Are her hat and coat there?"

"No, they're about the only things not in their usual place. I don't know where she kept her money—but the funniest thing about it is that her missionary box was lying on her desk, broken open."

Miss Cooke went back to her room. She walked about from one thing to another, and one could see that she was extremely upset. She examined some growths incubating under cover-glasses on her walnut side-table; she fluffed up the pillows on her window-seat; she straightened a picture whose slant had never

worried her before, and finally she drew her easy chair by the drop-light on her table, threw some poultry journals upon her lap, and tried to read. By and by, Buff claimed her attention with a yawn and a stretching of his yellow body at her knee, his nails digging in a little too vehemently. And Buff got his hair combed while he basked and purred and blinked in Miss Cooke's lap.

Ten o'clock. Even ten-thirty. Miss Cooke went out to lock the front door, peering across the now lightless Campus and up and down the village road, where only one or two lamps blinked. She heard the water rushing under the arch, as it flowed down from the upper dam. Her mind reverted to the disappearance of one of the students, many years ago—then, strangely, to the College ghost, and the ghost that had climbed up the piazza roof and taken Pegs' hundred dollars.

She locked the door with a little laugh, turned out the light in the hall, and then creaked upstairs through the silent house to the top floor. Jo was still away. She put out her light and shut the door. No sound came from the invalids' ward, where Effie had turned down the light when she had seen that all was well with them for the night.

Miss Cooke went back again to her room, and then finally to bed, with Buff snuggled comfortably at her feet.

Next morning brought no Jo, and no word from her. Directly after breakfast Miss Cooke made her way over to the Dean's office to find if, by any chance, Jo

had received permission to go out of town. No permission had been given, and girls were not allowed, in these "Flu times," to go out without permission, even to the City. Nevertheless, they telephoned to a family in town who were her friends, but she had not been there. Nor had she been at any of the houses where she was known in the village. Only old Mr. Byron said he had seen Jo going past his window toward the sash factory the previous afternoon and had waved his hand to her. But as Mr. Byron's eyesight was not too good with his years, his statement was not too seriously credited.

As a final resort, when Jo did not return by the afternoon, they sent a telegram to Galesport, Maine, addressed to her mother, and elicited this reply:

"MRS GUILFORD AWAY FROM TOWN TWO WEEKS
DONT KNOW WHERE

"POSTMASTER"

If there had not been so much excitement over the approaching Christmas holidays, the fact of Jo Guilford's disappearance would never have been kept within bounds. Only at Journey's End was there any concern, and that was on the part of Miss Cooke and Effie. They felt that Jo had gone away intending to return and might have gotten ill somewhere. They scouted any other idea. But the girls on the second floor put another construction upon Jo's disappearance. It was Spice, holding forth in Pegs' room after dinner:

"I tell you," said Spice, "that girl had good reason for getting away! She heard me say what I thought

of her and you should have seen the look on her face. I don't think she'll be back to this burg very soon again."

"Well," said Pegs hotly, "you know you have nothing to prove your charges. You were just led up to it all by a handkerchief with a piece of gum sticking to it. It might have no connection at all."

"*You* seemed to think it did, at the time," retorted Spice, "and thanks to your not coming out with it, I am now minus a silver brush and comb."

"You know Miss Cooke agrees with me."

Spice shrugged her shoulders in contempt. "I know one thing," she said, "Jo Guilford will never come back while I'm here." And she flung out of the room.

"Open the window, Thara," exclaimed Pegs, "and let's get a breath of fresh air after that. I know what *I* think about Jo and I wish to goodness I'd had the spunk to tell her before she went away. Maybe she'd have stayed."

"You can never tell about these things," commented Thara undecidedly. "I think Spice may be right. A girl who goes away like that plainly admits her guilt."

"Stop it!—Stop it!" cried Pegs, planting herself at her desk, her hands over her ears. "I have to study."

CHAPTER XII

NOEL

IN the midst of all this came Christmas, with a spirit that might have cleared the atmosphere at Journey's End, had not the weed of rancor been too deeply rooted.

During the next few days there was nothing but bustle and busy-ness. Trunks had to be packed for home-going and they were pulled out long before it was necessary. Railroad tickets had to be ordered and trunk-checks applied for. And then the girls had to study—of course, that had to be squeezed in somehow. And incidentally, they were going to have a personal Christmas tree the night of the Christmas concert and the "Grind" Committee in charge of it, consisting mainly of Pegs, had been heard giggling behind closed doors, barred by an ENGAGED sign.

That Christmas concert! The big double choir of the College were going to sing, and for some weeks, through the open windows of the Chapel, in the evening, there had floated the echoes of Christmas anthems and old carols they were practicing. Professor Howard was getting his church and vesper choirs into shape, to sing the music that was so well loved.

There had been doubt, at first, as to whether there could be any Christmas concert, owing to the danger of influenza. Large gatherings were not liked, and if

many visitors were to come in from the City, there was every chance of their bringing with them the dreaded germ. The first decision was to bar visitors, but after due consideration and debate, Professor Howard hit upon a plan to admit visitors by ticket only, and he guaranteed not to give tickets to any one who, in his diagnosis, presented the least symptoms of the Flu. So the City and Town were not to be entirely deprived of their pleasure, after all.

“And just think,” said Thara that night, as she was getting into her black waist and skirt, “Mr. Howard says he has given five hundred tickets away.”

“Five hundred!” exclaimed Pegs, as she was shaking out the folds of her crisp white surplice at arms’ length. “Why, I didn’t know there were that many people outside of College who didn’t have the Flu!”

For Pegs was in the Junior Choir, too, having gotten in, so she said, on the echo of Thara’s voice, and she always sat next to Thara when they sang at vespers, so that Thara would “fill in the cracks.”

To-night the dinner bell rang at 5.30, and its summons was promptly obeyed. There was excitement as the girls seated themselves at the dinner table, the black costumes denoting the singers of the house.

“Are you ready to sing?” asked Miss Cooke of Pegs, who sat next to her.

“I’m *ready*,” replied Pegs. “I don’t know about the *singing*, though.”

At which Miss Cooke, knowing the secret, laughed.

“But we have our Christmas party first. Don’t forget, Miss Cooke.”

“And when is Santa Claus coming?” asked Mary

Hubbard, who had watched the Committee all day, trailing into the house fir-trees they had chopped from way down in Devil's Garden, and greens they had ripped out of their frozen hollows in the woods.

"Oh, well, Santa doesn't generally tell beforehand."

"But what did you do with all those greens?" persisted Spice Becker.

"Greens? What greens?" asked Pegs innocently. "Oh, singing makes me so *hungry!* Don't detain me from this most delicious chicken salad—and hot biscuits! Effie, dear, it's so good to have you well again!"

After supper, mystery. All but the Committee were admonished to stay in the parlor and play the piano, while the Committee drew the portières and skipped upstairs. Ten minutes later, the ringing of the dinner bell put a stop to the din of the music, and at the top of the stairs a red-gowned Santa Claus beckoned them to come up.

"Be not afraid," he said. "I am going to take you up the chimney to my sled on the roof."

"Roof! We'll slide down the shingles."

"Say jingles, not shingles," shaking the sleighbells buckled round his corpulence.

"Jingle bells, jingle bells,
Jingle all the way.
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh!

"Sing, if you want to get your little orange and bag of candy!" And all joined in, while Santa jigged and jingled around:

“Jingle bells, jingle bells,
Jingle all the way.
Oh, what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh!”

Old Santa's voice was cracked—and it gave away his identity. But nothing daunted his jolly hilarity, as he bounded before them, two steps at a time, leading to the top floor, and flinging open the door of the sick-room in the front.

“Doctor prescribed a teaspoonful of excitement tonight, seasoned with a few grains of common sense. ENTER!”

Julia Talbot started forward, to do the honors of the occasion, while the other two patients, dressed in bathrobes, were sitting up in easy chairs. The room was draped with greens and red bells, and over in the corner stood the Christmas tree, hung with many-colored papers, each gay paper holding a candy. And there was “snow,” and gold tinsel, and strings of pink and white pop-corn; and there were mysterious packages and bundles.

“Welcome to Flui-ville,” began Julia grandly, and might have ended so, but for a sudden draught of air—“Ker-choo!”

“Gracious!” exclaimed Santa, jumping. “Don't do that again! You'll make me jump out of my suit!”

But the visitors to Flui-ville stood on no further ceremony, but deposited themselves on the floor, roundabout the TREE, their feet under them, Turkish fashion. And Miss Cooke was there, too, with Buff in her arms, and so was Effie.

“Now, I know you are all anxious for your presents, so we will begin.”

And one by one, the mysterious packages were handed from the tree by one of the Committee to Santa Claus, who read out each girl's name.

Each was requested to read off the verse that accompanied her parcel. Such presents, and such verses, and such gales of laughter!

Thara got a golden harp, decked with St. Patrick green, bought from some five and ten cent store.

“Oh, angel with the golden voice,
Upon thy golden lyre,
Sing us to heaven, keep us entranced,
With that celestial choir!”

Mary Hubbard got a little cubical box which opened with a squeal. A jumping-jack with a quizzical face bobbed out of it, whom Mary promptly named “Mr. Moriarty” and hugged to her heart.

“Mary always wanted a ‘man,’ ” Santa explained.

Spice took her package with misgiving. She was afraid to open it, but put it to her ear and shook it.

“That's right,” said Santa, “shake it. That's what it's for. But better unwrap it and give us a peek.”

It was a salt-shaker!

“Plenty of salt,” remarked Santa, while Spice pouted. “No comments?”

“No.”

“None needed.—Hurry up now,” said Santa to the Committee. “Any more? Any more?”

“Pegs Whiting,” called the girl at the tree.

“Pegs Whiting,” repeated Santa. “Where is Pegs

Whiting? O—Pe-egs! Well, I declare! She keeps us hunting! She must have fallen into one of the cracks of her voice.—Oh, there you are!” And Santa waved his arm toward the door.

And as they turned around to look, off came Santa’s mask and cap, and Pegs was revealed to them when they turned back again.

“Now open your package, Pegs,” insisted Spice.

“I’m really—er—er—afraid to,” said Pegs, dangling a little oblong box at the end of a string, “for I didn’t have any hand in making up this one.”

But she opened the package with a sigh. Inside was a small Japanese box containing a brown powdery substance, and a Christmas card bearing the inscription:

“YOURS FOR A GOOD, HARD SNEEZE.”

“Ker-choo!” said Pegs as she put the box to her nose. “Alias, Snuff! I suppose I’m to snuff, all right. You rascals, to harp on my pet string!” And she shook her fist at the other two, who stood on the other side of the tree, laughing.

“Well, now, what next?” said Santa, resuming his cap and his rôle. “What are those little packages of pink and blue tissue paper?”

“Why, I don’t know who put them there,” pretended the others. “Not the ‘Grind’ Committee.”

“Well, all the more reason why we should open them.”

The packages were all alike and each package bore the name of a girl. Inside were three linen handkerchiefs, bearing the girl’s initials, and a Christmas card from Miss Cooke.

“Well, well—” commented Santa, holding his sides. “This is a royal present in these hard times. Miss Cooke must have noticed our wash.”

Whereat they all laughed, and Miss Cooke was “hugged to pieces.”

“But, Martha,” said Santa to one of his assistants, “what is that white thing under the greens?” indicating with the toe of his boot a little pile under the tree.

“Oh, that? I’m sure I haven’t the least idea.”

“Well, let us see,” said Santa masterfully. “Um-m, I think maybe Miss Cooke had better investigate this.” And he bore, with great pomp, a tray-like object covered with a white napkin. “Take the napkin off, Miss Cooke,” he said, depositing the object in her lap.

“Oh-h!” It took Miss Cooke’s breath away, for underneath the napkin lay a box with a dozen silver teaspoons.

“Appropriate words fail us,” said Santa. “We just wish you a Merry Christmas!”

But there *were* a few words, and Miss Cooke wiped her glasses many times. And during the hubbub and giggling, a package was presented to Effie, containing a beautiful blue sweater, knitted by the champion knitter of Hampden town, from pounds and pounds of wool.

“Knit from the yarns Mrs. Rachael tells,” commented Santa. “For once gossip finds a useful end.—Oh, is there something else?”

Santa took off the tree a little circle of pink tissue that had hung on a branch.

“Let me see—‘BLUFF’—where are my glasses?—

Oh, 'For Buff.' ” And Santa unwrapped the little circle of tissue. It was a collar of tan leather, studded with gilt nails.

“A collar, for Buff to wear Sundays.—I don't suppose we can expect him to wear it every day, or he'd wear his hair off and have a bald spot around the neck.”

Miss Cooke laughed and helped to adjust the collar on Buff, who looked immensely proud. And prouder yet was Miss Cooke.

“Phew! It's hot,” at last said Santa, and, his work now done, he commenced to take off his red cap and robe, and his pillow stomacher.

“Now I can be happy again,” said Pegs, as she collapsed on the floor at the feet of Miss Cooke. “But I forgot, where is our choir?—No, don't look at Julia's clock, it's always fast. We have half an hour yet. Let's sing the Christmas carols for our invalids. They won't be there to-night.”

And while they sang, they heard the clothes elevator rattling up in the hall, and Effie came in with a tray loaded with cups of after-dinner coffee, surrounding a big box of chocolates.

“That is Effie's treat,” said Miss Cooke.

“Gorgeous! Scrumptious! Will wonders ever cease!” For the coffee—and, above all, the chocolates—touched the right spot. And while the others ate, six of the choir grouped together and sang those beautiful old carols, the Christmas songs of various climes.

Sarah Thayer sang the solo parts, and as her fine young voice rose and searched each nook and cranny

of the big room, it sounded indeed like one of those celestial choristers.

“Thara Thara,” whispered Pegs, as they were finally sauntering down the stairs, arms round each other’s shoulders, “it is most divine! I wish *you* were going to sing a solo to-night, instead of Flo Dietz. You bet I do!”

But there was no time to lose. The Chapel bell was ringing. They should have been down in the music room long ago. Pegs put on her black skirt and combed back some loose ends of fair hair that had gone awry. Then they slipped on their coats and, cottas over their arms, stepped out into the crisp night and struck across the Campus.

All the College was going in the direction of the Chapel, as the bell was pealing out. In front, stood several trolley cars, just arrived from the City and one from the direction of Elmhurst College. A line of automobiles, too, that brought more friends to the College, was there. At the front of the Chapel was a flurry and rustle of wraps and fine gowns, and a bustle of ushers, and program-girls, and guests, while intermingling, the students slipped in quietly here and there. And little by little, as the bell died down to a toll, the whole Chapel was filled, except a bank of empty seats on the platform, sloping down toward and beyond the organ desk. These were for the Choir.

Downstairs in the music room and in and out of the brick-lined halls, went members of the Choir, snow-white cottas over their black dresses, and on the left side, a spray of holly, a huge box of which Professor Howard and his wife had brought in their automobile.

Professor Howard was busy—giving out music and funny comments, stirring his Choir to a pitch of enthusiasm that would make them sing well.

“Now, remember, the College is going home day after to-morrow, and you want to make this concert a worth-while memory to take home with them—to say nothing of the guests from the City—and the *Elmhurst boys*. Does *that* strike an echoing chord? Now, everybody, take your places in line and stay put. We are going up in a minute—now put on your best smile. ‘The voice with a smile wins.’ Miss Dietz—Miss Baldwin.” He gathered his soprano and contralto soloists on each side of him, where he could see them. “You know where to sing to—up to the roof!—What is the matter, Miss Dietz?”

“It’s very warm,” replied Florence Dietz, clearing her throat and swallowing uncomfortably.

“Oh, no, not warm.—You’ll feel better upstairs, where it’s not so close. Come, let’s go.”

He led a double line up the narrow, winding stairs, while up the opposite stairs another double line followed Miss Baldwin. Out at the Chapel platform the two lines converged, as a whisper of admiration fluttered through the audience.

Professor Howard slipped over his organ bench, cleared his gown of it, arranged the music, pulled out a few stops, wiped his face and glasses, pulled out a few more stops, then looked back over his choir to see if they had finally settled down and were ready. Then, following a huge intake of breath from the organ, came some introductory lines, and the notes of that beautiful carol soared up among the arches:

"The Babe in Bethl'em's manger laid—
In—hum^lle form so low—
By wond'ring angels is surveyed—
Through—all its scenes of woe!

"Noel! No-el!
Now sing a Saviour's birth!
All hail His coming down to earth,
Who raises us to heaven!"

And so they went through all the old tunes the College and its friends knew and loved so well—carols of all nations, that lost nothing with American voices, on American ears: "Oh, come, all ye faithful," "As by my sheep I watched at night," with the "Joy, joy, joy," vox humana, done by a tenor brought from the City and secreted in back of the organ by the smiling Professor Howard. "Oh, little town of Bethlehem," and "Silent night, holy night," which had not lost favor because it had been sung in enemy trenches during the dreadful war.

During this recital, which went off most grandly, only one cloud dimmed Professor Howard's vision. Florence Dietz sat to his left and a little in front of him. He had heard her clear her throat rather oddly several times, and saw her put her hand to her head and face. Was she nervous? he thought. No, that was not a sign of nervousness, and Florence Dietz had sung solos before. Finally, during one of the choruses, Florence Dietz got up, looked around rather dazedly at him, and went toward the side door. Her roommate, sitting in the audience near by, followed her as she slipped out.

"Well, I wonder what that means?" muttered Professor Howard to Sarah Thayer who sat beside him.

“Miss Dietz doesn’t look right to me to-night, somehow.”

But the music had to go on, and Professor Howard began the next song. “Miss Dietz is due for the next number,” he said. “Nice time to be running out.”

When this was finished, Miss Dietz’ roommate reappeared at the door of the anteroom, and during the intermission made her way to the organ desk, where she whispered a few words to Professor Howard.

“You don’t say!” muttered the latter, looking after her, spell-bound, as she retreated. “Here’s a pretty mess! Miss Dietz has the Flu. She stuck it out the best she could, and she couldn’t hold out any longer. Now she can’t sing her solo!”

“How dreadful,” said those around. “What are you going to do now?”

Professor Howard wiped his face with his handkerchief. “Search me!” he said.

Pegs, who sat the other side of Sarah Thayer, got a brilliant thought and acted upon it.

“Professor Howard,” she whispered, leaning across Sarah and pulling the organist by the sleeve of his gown, “I tell you what you do. Let Sarah Thayer sing! You know she can, and she knows the part! Make her!”

Professor Howard was catching at straws that moment. Anything would do—Yes, he knew Miss Thayer sang well—but solo?

“Make her sing!” still echoed Pegs.

“Sing, Miss Thayer,” ordered Professor Howard with a certain decision, and he began to play the intro-

duction of the next anthem. "Everybody, stand up! Ready? Miss Thayer, sing!"

There was no time for embarrassment. Pegs' nudge had brought her to herself and the realization of what she must do. The music was upon her. She sang:

"O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth!
Long lay the world, in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth—"

It was the same fine young voice that had sung to the invalids an hour before. Clear and clearer it rose up to the roof-beams:

"A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn—
Fall on your knees!—oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night divine—O night—O night divine!"

And then, with the soft echo of the chorus:

"Fall on your knees!—oh, hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night divine—O night—O night divine!"

CHAPTER XIII

THE RETURN

THE Christmas holidays were over—much too soon. Two weeks had flown on the wings of a gale, and before they knew it they were back again. The Freshmen, especially, went home with a fierce longing, and a hope never to come back again—how forlorn a hope they well knew. They went home, too, with a mental swagger and a gusto of having many things to tell—they were cram-jammed with things to tell.

Thara Thara went off with a halo. Her unexpected solo at the Christmas Concert had carried the College off its feet. She had taken all the other solos that Florence Dietz was scheduled to sing, and her splendid fresh voice and her rushing in to fill the breach made Professor Howard ready to hug her, so he said—if he had not been married.

“You’re a good sport, Miss Thayer,” he said after the concert. “I don’t know what I’d have done without you!”

“Isn’t she, just?” cried Pegs, wrapping her white-clad arms about her roommate. “Didn’t she have the spunk!”

“Well, she had the voice, anyway,” said Professor Howard. “It was you that had the spunk. You literally shoved her on her feet.”

But nevertheless, Pegs took none of the credit. Thara had the *voice*. The halo was all Sarah's own.

But what difference did it make? They were going home, and Pegs felt that Daddy would be satisfied with her. Mother, she thought, wouldn't be—quite—if she could have seen her sweeping her own room and washing her own handkerchiefs. In the hustle and hurry, nobody cared about halo or credit.

Mary Hubbard puttered around the halls and down cellar in her comfy slippers all night long, fussing about the packing of her steamer trunk, which was going to be taken before the rising bell the next day. She went to bed to dream about missing trains, etc. Next day, when the time for departure was drawing nigh, Spice discovered that Mary was without hat or shoes, having packed them into her steamer trunk which had gone! She went home in her comfy slippers, with galoshes over them, and Pegs lent her a tam-o'-shanter.

But they were all coming back now, hurrying to catch trains going the other way. The holidays had been crammed with doings—theaters, parties, dress-making, concerts, to say nothing of meetings with loved friends and relatives.

They were all back by the evening before the opening of the second term, trailing down the road from the trolley car, suitcases in hand, to where the lights of Journey's End glowed out into the night. It had snowed during the holidays, to an appreciable depth. It all looked so white and queer—that cold returning.

The first thing Pegs saw as she entered the hall was Miss Cooke, standing before the bright fireplace, with

Buff in her arms, trying to persuade him that all good cats stayed in at night.

“Oh, Miss Cooke!” cried Pegs, dropping her suitcase and hugging Miss Cooke with a hug that almost dislodged Buff from her arms. “I’m so glad to be back again! I really am! It’s so good to see you!”

She forgot all about the coldness and queerness, once she got inside. She was home again, and with a “Yoo-hoo!” she was up in her room and in her roommate’s arms.

There were things to tell!

All the girls were back that night, and every little while a tramp on the stairs and a thud of a suitcase told of a new arrival. As they looked across from Pegs’ window, the whole Campus, which had lain dark and cheerless for two weeks, now glowed with lights, that fell in streaks from the many windows, upon the snow. It would not be long before College life would be running normally again.

About half-past nine Pegs went down to the kitchen for a pitcher of water and Spice followed with her pitcher, Mary Hubbard trailing on behind for need of company. Pegs was pumping away to get cold water when suddenly the door from the dining room opened. It was Jo Guilford, Gladstone bag in hand. She had just arrived.

“Well, I snum!” from Pegs who almost dropped her pitcher. “Where did you come from?”

“From Boston,” was the quiet answer. They could see that the girl was embarrassed and she looked very white.

“Well—well—” began Spice, her nose at an incline

of forty-five degrees toward the zenith. She got no further. She changed her mind, and nose still in the ascendant, she turned and walked out of the kitchen.

Almost simultaneously, at the door leading out from the hallway of Miss Cooke's apartment, appeared Miss Cooke in a gray kimono. She looked as if she had hurried out of her room, to prevent eventualities.

"Why, Josephine," she said, "how are you feeling? Where is Cicely?" She turned to Pegs. "Did I not hear her a moment ago?"

"She went upstairs," replied Pegs, still bewildered. "Where have you been, Jo? We were dreadfully worried."

"Josephine has been sick." This came from Miss Cooke.

"Sick? Sick?—Why—" Pegs was at a loss for words.

"Josephine wrote me last week," explained Miss Cooke hurriedly. "All of you come to my study, though, and we'll talk. I was just getting a little hot lemonade ready," she went on, as she led the way through the narrow hall, "and you are just in time for it. It will do you good, Josephine, after your long trip."

Pegs and Jo followed Miss Cooke in, Mary hanging on diffidently in the rear, her brow worried with something she was trying to recall.

"You see," said Miss Cooke, "Josephine felt very sick the day she left here. She knew she was getting influenza, and didn't want to give us the trouble of taking care of her, too."

“Influenza!” cried Pegs. “You had influenza?—And all the while we thought—”

“You thought I’d left because—because of what Spice Becker thought.” Jo was studying the corner of the rug, as she turned it over with her toe. “I—I—know it was rather a miserable way to leave without saying good-by, but I just—just—couldn’t after the scene Spice Becker made. I couldn’t stand it any longer. I had to go and—I thought if I was going to be sick I’d better go to Aunt Etta’s in Boston, where mother and I were going to spend Christmas. But, Miss Cooke, I didn’t know I’d left you worrying about me, till I got your letter in reply to mine.”

“There, child, don’t worry about that now,” said Miss Cooke. “I suppose you were too upset with Cicely and perhaps too sick to think.”

“I was dazed and miserable. But I did leave you a note, anyway, Miss Cooke, and that explained.”

“You wrote to me?” Miss Cooke was puzzled. “I found no note.”

“Why, I gave it—yes, I gave it to Mary Hubbard to give to you. You remember I did, don’t you, Mary?”

“Why, I was trying to think—” trailed Mary’s voice from a Morris chair. “I—you did give me a note, but I had to go to recitations and I put it in a book—”

“You never gave me any note, child,” said Miss Cooke, “and it was most important.”

“I know—I knew something was wrong all along. I—I didn’t know what became of the note.”

“It is too bad, Jo, the way things happened,” said Pegs. “We were all very much worried about you.—”

As for Spice, I shouldn't let what she says or thinks worry me."

"It is easy to say that, but not so easy to practice."

Jo went back to studying the rug, and Pegs, abashed, said no more.

"I am sorry—I am sorry," was the last thing Mary said that night, as she took Jo's bag from her and went, ashamed, upstairs. "Jo," she added, as she deposited the really heavy burden outside the dark little room till Jo could light a light. "I could die for having forgotten that note. I don't deserve to be forgiven—but—anyway, I don't believe what Spice believes—and—"

Jo put both arms about her impulsively and kissed her. Mary went to bed that night sure that she was forgiven, however little she deserved it.

They had to get back to the routine of things. It was not so hard, because the work had been cut out for them and they had to go to recitations next day just as usual. Latin and Math and English opened to them yearning, cavernous arms, and they had to go—with a grunt and a dragging step. Oh, well, what did they come to College for?

And yet there were compensations, too, to make up for the hard work. That afternoon, after recitations, here and there snowshoes came into evidence and girls floundering around on them, ungainly, in the expanses of snow in the back of things. Here and there, too, girls on skis, pushing along laboriously on things that always met or diverged, but never moved along parallel. But what interested our Freshmen most were the boys on the church road, in front of

Journey's End. They had worn the snow on the hill down to a thick heavy sheet and down this hill they were coasting on sleds.

Pegs and Thara were going across the opened path to the apple-tree gate when they came upon this luscious scene.

"I wonder if they could be persuaded to let us ride," remarked Pegs, casting longing eyes on a "belly-whopper." "Hey, Billy! will you give us a ride?"

"To-morrow!" called Billy, as he whizzed past on his stomach.

"Oh, say, won't you," coaxed Pegs, as Billy dragged his sled back up again, "for some fudge?—Yes, surely," she added as she saw Billy weakening, "and a dime, too."

But Billy rallied. He had been in school all day and these were his few minutes before chores.

"I don't know, you might smash the sled. You don't know how and there's a bad turn by the bridge over the brook."

"Oh, I'd pay for it if I broke it," Pegs hastened to assure the proprietor.

"I don't know," he said, "sizing" her up. "Anyway, sleds are more expensive than they used to be." And he moved off, with that as a final argument.

"It looks as if we'd have to buy a family sled," remarked Sarah.

"Good idea. Wonder if they keep them in the village store. We will have a council of war and take a collection for one.—There's Miss Cooke in the hen-yard. Let's go and see what she's doing."

They threw their books on the front piazza and

sauntered back toward the barn. The hen-yard had been cleared of snow by the now convalescent Ham, who had piled it along the wall of chicken wire. During storms, the chickens stayed in the barn and coops, but now they were out in the clearing, strutting back and forth, occasionally stopping and pulling up first one cold foot and then the other, to warm them in their feathers.

"I am looking over my prize birds," Miss Cooke remarked, as the girls approached.

"Are those the prize ones—that yellow fellow with the chest? He looks like a railroad magnate, or like a mayor receiving royalty."

"He is the cock—that waked the morn," replied Miss Cooke, reciting. "He is going to the Poultry Show in New York."

"Really!"

"Yes, I've entered a cock and a hen; also a cockerel and a pullet."

The girls looked up, puzzled.

"That is a new one on us, Miss Cooke," remarked Pegs. "What does 'cockerel' mean? It sounds like Anglo-Saxon."

"It is hen-talk," laughed Miss Cooke. "It means 'young cock.' I'm not quite sure, however, which hen to take."

"Oh, yoo-hoo!" A halloo came from the top floor dormer window. Julia Talbot and Fanny Kincaid were there, with heads out. "What cher doing?"

"Come on down," called back Pegs. "We're picking winners!"

Julia and Fanny were down in a jiffy, returning back into the house to steal coats from the hall and throw them over their shoulders when Miss Cooke insisted on their going back for something.

“You see,” explained Miss Cooke, “this is the prize lot in this run-way. I rank them the way I mark examination papers. I mark these AA. Over there in the other compartment are the possibilities and the has-beens. They are marked B. Those over in the far-away section are marked CC. They are the *eatables*.”

The girls laughed with Miss Cooke.

“Poor relations, so to speak,” remarked Fanny.

“I suppose,” suggested Sarah, “they are the ones we like the best. We are best acquainted with them.”

“On Sundays,” added Pegs.

“At breakfast,” went on Miss Cooke, “you get acquainted with their progeny.”

There was a pause, filled with a long smile from Miss Cooke.

“Oh, eggs?” at last burst out Julia. “Of course,” as they all laughed.

“And sometimes you get the progeny of Class B. But Class AA—”

“They are the privileged class. Do they lay golden eggs?”

“Almost. Anyway, they sell for ten dollars a dozen.”

“Phew!” from Pegs. “What height has the H. C. L. reached!”

“Well, not exactly H. C. L.; these are meant for the incubator. Buff Orpingtons are a splendid hardy

breed, and fine layers. They are very popular. And that is why I must select carefully, as there is going to be much competition."

"I should select that biddy with the embonpoint," suggested Pegs, indicating a fine healthy creature, to whom his royal highness was paying his devoirs. "She looks like the leader of the 400."

"Heaven preserve her then," remarked Julia, who was a New Yorker also, and, living in the Bronx, had a right to pass an opinion on such things. "Now, I would take this slimmer lady. She is so agile and athletic. She looks like Joan of Arc in armor."

"On a horse?"

"Off a horse. I think she is a prize beauty. Won't you take her, Miss Cooke?"

"I think I have almost decided to take Margaret's choice. In a worldly world, you know, embonpoint counts. Besides she has many other points."

"So you will take Bedilia!" cried Pegs, clapping her hands.

"Oh, not by that name," objected Miss Cooke. "It would ruin her chances!"

"But Bedilia is lovely! Long for Bidy, you know."

"A rose by any other name will smell as sweet," quoth Fanny.

"But not this rose," persisted Miss Cooke. "You will have to do better than that if you want to name her."

"Oh, I know," cried Thara. "We will give a romantic name and a real patriotic name."

"What is it, Thara?" said Pegs. "Hurry, don't keep me in suspense so long."

“We will call her ‘Lady Hampden,’ in honor of the College.”

“That’s better,” approved Miss Cooke. “‘Lady Hampden’ will look well on the program.”

“Now we will have to give his high-and-mightiness an appellation,” went on Julia. “He looks like a lord—”

“I have it,” from Pegs—“Lord Elmhurst!”

“Well, that’s fine,” said Miss Cooke. “Now I shall have to write to the Committee to-night and give them the detail of my entries. The show is next week and we leave for the city on Saturday.”

“Well, I’m sure we wish you the best of luck, Miss Cooke,” said Pegs, as they moved off in the now fast-gathering twilight, to dress for supper. “I hope Lord Elmhurst and Lady Hampden will come back with blue ribbons flying!”

CHAPTER XIV

BLACK AND MIDNIGHT DEEDS

SATURDAY came—the day that the four Orpingtons were to start for New York. Miss Cooke had been up bright and early, bustling about the henyard and the barn, and giving last instructions to Effie and Ham as to how they should take care of her “birds” in her absence. A certain desperate, protesting squawking told the inhabitants of Journey’s End that his high-and-mightiness Lord Elmhurst had been caught after a chase, and was at last in the crate. Lady Hampden was more tractable, being of a trusting nature. The cockerel and pullet named “William Tell” and “Spring Maid” respectively, were caught without much ado or noise.

Miss Cooke missed breakfast, but as the girls were eating they saw, through the dining room windows, a motor delivery wagon back up to the barn and Miss Cooke superintending the transfer of her precious birds to the same, with minute instructions to the driver. Her suitcase was then put into the wagon before its doors were shut again and it chugged off, while Miss Cooke hurried in to get her gloves and handbag.

The girls flocked to the hall to see her off, leaving breakfast unfinished and napkins unfolded.

“Oh, Miss Cooke!” cried the girls, as they were

clattering down the front steps. "Good luck to you and our birds of Paradise! Bon voyage!"

"Thank you," said Miss Cooke, out of breath, stopping for a moment and then going back to the group. "Now, girls, I'm going to be gone a week, and I want you all to be good. And I want you to take care and dress warmly."

"Oh, we will, we will."

"We'll be as good as gold," from Pegs.

"Effie will look out for you and so will Louise Gaylord, who, as Senior, takes my place as head of the house."

"We'll be real good," said Thara. "Don't worry. Just enjoy yourself and bring back lots of blue ribbons."

"Well, all right. I won't worry. Write to me. Effie has the address. Good-by; I must hurry or I'll miss the car."

Yes, they meant well; but then, how wonderful that feeling of freedom when the one supposed to watch over you goes off on a journey!

The sled the village store-keeper had promised to get them had not yet arrived, but bribes of sundry nickels had elicited a number of rides that Saturday afternoon, which only served to whet the appetite for more. But the winter sun sank only too soon, and night found them on tip-toe for something exciting.

"What do you say, Thara," said Pegs as they all separated after prayer meeting in the parlor, which had not, indeed, subdued their spirits, "let's have that spread to-night. Mother just stuffed my trunk. I have jam and cookies, and minced ham and sardines,

and if we don't begin soon, those things are all going to spoil."

"Perfectly dandy! But I have to do Geometry now. Let's have it to-morrow."

"To-morrow nothing. I feel like doing something wild. We'll do it after ten."

"Now, easy, Pegs! You know, I have only two more sit-ups and I'll need them, goodness knows, for Midyears."

"Sit-ups! Who said sit-ups? We don't need to take any to-night. We'll just put the light out as usual. There's a fine moon out, and the snow makes it all the brighter. All we need is to raise the shades."

"You know what you promised Miss Cooke," reminded Thara.

"Yes." Pegs was thoughtful for a moment. "But, lands! We're not going to make a noise. We're only going to eat. And it'll be just for a little while. And we'll have Mary and Spice in, and Julia Talbot and Fanny Kincaid.—My! I'm still hungry, Thara. I've got to eat!"

"Well, all right. Go ahead and fix your spread and send out invitations. I've work to do." And Thara dropped into the chair at her desk and buried herself in her Geometry.

The invitations were whispered within the two other rooms and received with high glee. Eating forms ninety-five percent of a college girl's life. Not the three prosaic more or less square meals a day; but the 'tween meals, that stand out like milestones in many a diary and letter home. No affair is complete without something to EAT.

And what a zest there is to "stolen sweets" like this. Their R. S. V. P. was a hug and a dance around. They were ready to eat—they were ready for something as scandalously wild as they could possibly imagine with the materials at hand.

The retiring bell found Pegs floating around in her bathrobe, opening cans and olive bottles and glasses of jelly. She had previously made a raid to the kitchen in her gymnasium sneakers and had commandeered handfuls of college biscuit, but had to beat a quick retreat with most of her intentions left behind, when she heard Effie's door creak open.

An ENGAGED sign on their door had up to this time guarded their privacy from intrusion. Now on the first stroke of ten, their light went out, for Sue Bradford, a homely red-headed girl who was proctor and whose conscientiousness made up for her lack of beauty, was very particular about lights and saw to it that every room was dark after ten and every door closed. She was a fiend at stooping down and "Sherlock-Holmesing" under the crack, to see that no glow of light remained. You could not fool Sue.

Thara, divested of her garments and her worry about Geometry, now joined in the preparations. There were smothered footsteps, muted questions and answers, and by and by, when all seemed quite dead about the house, the knob of their door turned softly and four figures in nightgowns and bathrobes pattered in and plumped themselves about on the couches in expectant attitudes.

What was forthcoming was quite up to their expect-



They were ready to eat—they were ready for something scandalously wild.

tations. Sardines on crackers, and olives, jelly sandwiches, more sandwiches, cookies and nuts—all in the gloaming of that darkened room with the wonderful moonlight streaming in through the windows.

“I want to keep the olives right by me,” whispered Spice. “They’re heavenly! But say, how do you reach them when they get down so far?”

“Take my hat pin,” suggested Sarah. “It’s behind that blue vase on my chiffonier.”

“What color did you say it was, Thara?” inquired Julia Talbot, as the girls giggled. “You’d have to have cat’s sight to see that in here.”

“Or you might bring the suspected vase out and examine it in the moonlight.”

“Well, anyway,” pouted Thara, jerking herself upright on the couch, “that’s the way to get your olives if you want any.”

“Oh!” cried the voice of Mary, “the jam cracker went on the couch—yes, and jam side down! Oo-oo!”

“Well, I snum,” from Pegs, “and my couch, too! I’ll be stuck to it to-morrow, so that I can’t get up to go to church.”

“Oh, we’ll bear witness,” it was Julia Talbot who spoke. “We’ll write as excuse: ‘Anchored to her midnight spread’—Ker-choo!”

“Ow! There goes *my* cracker now, best side on the rug,” said her roommate. “I’ll bet that sneeze gives us away! Listen!”

There was a creak out in the hall—the sound of a stirring bathrobe, which the night stillness accentuated. Pegs, who sat in the stretch of moonlight, put her

finger to her lips for silence.—And finally again the creak. They knew the loose board was in front of Sue Bradford's door.

“All clear!” whispered Pegs, breathing again. “The raid is over—Zeppelins gone! Have another olive while they last. But don't sneeze again, Julia.”

“Well, I'm about full-up,” whispered Julia.

“But I'm not,” said the hoarser voice of Spice. “If we could only make a little fudge now.”

“Fudge! That's the thing,” cried Pegs, while the others “shished” her to reduce her voice; then more softly, “But I'm sorry. My hospitality does not go to the extent of fudge to-night.”

“I have the chocolate,” said Spice, “but no milk.—I have it. I saw Effie putting out the pans of milk on the pantry shelf to-night, and maybe—if we got just a little—”

“You do the fudge honors, Spice,” suggested Fanny Kincaid. “Suppose you raid the kitchen for milk.”

“Not I, said Cock Robin,” objected the white-livered Spice, “but—say—suppose we send Mary down. She hasn't contributed anything yet.”

“And do you suppose I want to contribute my young life?” 'plained Mary's voice.

“Now, don't be a coward.”—“And ungenerous.”

“No, no, no!” squealed Mary, jerking herself free of hands that were encouraging her to her feet. “Anyway, there'll be such a smell all over the house, everybody'll know we're making fudge.”

“No, they won't,” said Pegs, “they'll think it's in their dreams. Anyway, we'll shut the transom and open the window on this side and the smell will go

out. Go ahead, ducky. Get a cup from the pantry. You know where the milk pans are."

Mary could resist no longer. She was literally shoved out of the door and down the hall by tip-toeing figures, that followed to see that the deed was done. The leader, who was Pegs, dexterously piloted the party away from the creaking board at Sue Bradford's door and sundry other loose boards. Then they followed the quaking Mary down the short, winding stairs to the kitchen.

A low light showed them the lay of the land.

"Turn the light higher," whispered Pegs. "See? Right on that shelf above the table."

"Get a cup! Get a cup!" said Spice. "On the pantry shelves!"

"Some sugar, too, while you are about it," from Julia.

They had poor Mary jerking uncertainly from one direction to another, with conflicting instructions. Finally Pegs came to the rescue.

"Cups on pantry shelf," she whispered, peeping around a corner.

Mary reached for a cup.

"Now get on that chair and bring down the milk."

They held their breath while Mary mounted the chair and, watching the milk in the pan as she moved, began to descend with it.

"Ker-choo!" It was Julia Talbot.

Mary jumped. She might have lost her equilibrium, had it not been that Pegs, in her anxiety, had ventured far into the kitchen. Pegs caught the milk pan just as it was swaying. But the milk kept on swaying and

a big wave jerked out and splashed out all over Pegs' bathrobe and on the floor.

"That's what I call a milk bath," quoth Pegs.

Down came Mary from the chair, her responsibility now going over to another. Pegs turned around to scold the reckless Julia who could not capture her sneeze, but found the girls had disappeared from the stairs and only sundry giggles gave away that they had retreated to safer regions, though still on the watch.

What if Julia's sneeze had awakened other things than echoes! Pegs, too, became panic stricken for a moment, and thought discretion the better part of valor!

Pegs fled, leaving the milk pan again in the hands of Mary.

Mary clutched the pan tightly, her heart still in her mouth over the narrow escape. She saw that all but she had fled, who like Cassabianca persisted in her mission. Deathly silence! It made her turn and look up. At the door she had come in from, leading to Miss Cooke's and Effie's apartments, stood Effie herself, like Lot's wife turned to salt. Mary might have been a statue of marble "Consternation."

"I—I—came down for some water," she stammered at last.

"Well, you won't find it there," quoth the generally soft-spoken Effie. "That's the milk for breakfast and the biscuits, and most of it's on the floor now."

Mary looked about for an answer; but only a smothered giggle came from upstairs.

Effie stepped forward to rescue the remainder of the milk.

“This is the way you girls do, the minute Miss Cooke’s back is turned.”

Mary fled, but from the giggles and squeals, Effie knew that she had saved the milk from a conspiracy.

CHAPTER XV

WRECKED

“WELL, if you aren't the clumsiest,” scolded Spice, as Mary went up.

“It wasn't I—it was Julia's sneeze,” defended Mary, while the girls giggled at her abashment. “And you left me to get all the blame of it alone.” More giggles.

“I'm afraid Spice will have to do without her fudge to-night,” whispered Pegs, as they went inside her dark room again. “Anyway, I think it's getting pretty late. You-uns ought to go to bed.”

“Well, I don't go to bed yet,” said Spice decidedly. “I'll have to have something to make up for the fudge I might have had but for Mary and Julia. What time is it by moonlight?”

Pegs was taking her little china clock to the window.

“Eleven-thirty and all's well—so far. Oh-h! What a wonderful night! Come here by the window and take a breath. Isn't it glorious?” as the girls crowded around her. “Do you know what I'd like to do?—I'd like to go snowshoeing around in the moonlight—'way up to the top of Greenview Hill!”

“You know what I'd like to do?” said Mary. “I'd like to go coasting down the road.”

“Why, Mary,” said Spice, “'tis not often you get such a brilliant idea! Is it really yours?—Oh, I mean

it! And say, that's just the very thing! If we had our sled now!"

"Now?" exclaimed Julia. "Go coasting at eleven-thirty?"

"Well, it isn't so late in the city," protested Spice.

"But this is College," quoth Pegs, "and good little girls are supposed at this minute to be in a horizontal position between the sheets."

"Then we are committing a crime," from Fanny.

"You've committed several crimes to-night. Don't stain your soul with any more—to say nothing of the jam on my couch cover and rug."

"Well," said Spice, "you seem to be rather particular all of a sudden, after getting us into all this. I dare you to go out coasting to-night—right now!"

"That's an easy dare," said Julia, "'cause where's the sled?"

"Sled, quotha? Why, Pegs is very resourceful. Question: Where can you find a sled when you have none?"

"Oh, keep still," cried Pegs. "There are two sleds down below on the Millers' front porch. The kids leave them there all night. But you have no right to tempt me. Go yourself."

"I'll go, if you'll go," said Spice.

"Well, I'm no slacker. I'll go. What say the rest of you?"

"Not me," said Mary, visibly backing away.

"Nor I," said Fanny, with better English.

"Well, I'll go," decided Julia.

"But no more sneezes if you do," commanded Pegs.

"No," and Julia laughed.

"Say, little roommate," said Pegs, turning to Thara. "Whose 'ittle darling are you? Do you back your 'ittle Pegsy?"

"I suppose I must," said the loyal Thara. "I'll love the coasting, but, oh, eleven-thirty!"

"It's eleven-forty-five by now," announced Pegs. "Well, go on and get some more clothes on, and your galoshes. The more you linger, the worse the crime."

They vanished, silent and creakless, into the shadows. Five minutes later, four silhouettes appeared on the road. Two detached themselves from the group and went over toward the Miller house.

There were the sleds, one on top of the other, shaded from the bold moonlight by some bare lilac bushes. The house was still and lightless. Was there anybody sleeping on the first floor?

"I think we can venture," whispered Pegs to Spice, who followed her. "I'll go ahead and take the top sled off and you be ready when I hand it to you. I'll— Oh, thunder!" A wire in the little front garden, hidden in the coat of snow, tripped her and down she went full length, impressing her outline in the snow.

Spice smothered a laugh with her gloved hand, while the two on the road were seen to double up.

"That's nice of you," whispered Pegs. "I think you might take the lead sometimes. You always make somebody else the goat."

"I'm sorry, Pegs, but you *were* funny."

Pegs listened for nothing more, but went on, and Spice, avoiding the wire, went close behind.

Pegs cleared the garden and put a tentative foot on the first step of the porch, looking out for danger,

meanwhile, in the over-looking front windows. Luckily these had white shades, which were drawn close down. They were safe unless somebody peeped down under.

She steadied her foot on the snowy piazza step and mounted on. One feeling hand and a trial lift, and she raised the top sled carefully and handed it to Spice. That deposited safely in the snow of the garden, she raised the other sled, somewhat larger and heavier, and with a little more effort handed that to Spice.

Silently and with no further mishaps they passed out upon the road, dragging the sleds to the two waiting figures further up.

“Now, if any one sees us,” said Pegs, “they won’t know whose sleds these are nor who we are, either.”

“It’s no sin for the villagers to go coasting at twelve o’clock at night,” said Spice.

“Twelve is right,” remarked Thara, as the clock on Founder’s Hall tower began to strike twelve with incisive strokes. “Goodness, what a racket it makes! Do you suppose that clock will wake up everybody to come and look at us?”

“Don’t worry,” soothed Pegs, “it rings every night. Let’s coast.”

“May I hitch on behind you, Pegs?”

“Come on,” said Pegs, sliding forward on the sled.

“Spice, you take Julia behind you.”

“Say, I don’t want to wreck this sled with two on.”

“Well, if that sled is wrecked, it will be your weight that wrecked it, you old hippopotamus.—I say, let’s go!”

Off went Pegs’ sled with Thara hitching behind—

whizzing down the hill under Pegs' dexterous steering.

Spice followed, not quite so dexterously, side-tracked a bit, hit a buried stone, and then Julia bumped her off the front of her sled.

"There, I told you you would!" as she picked herself up and shook the snow out of her coat and skirt.

Julia giggled.

"You needn't laugh," said Spice.

"Well, you ought to be glad I didn't sneeze. Come on, we're wasting precious time. Try again or let me steer."

"I'll steer. Get on, if you are going to."

They passed Pegs and Thara coming up, and this time reached the bridge, where the hill ended, in safety.

Up and down they went in great glee.

"Suppose somebody should see us," said Sarah, looking around apprehensively.

"Perish the thought," quoth Pegs. "But we're rather at the outskirts of things here and the village would never care. Say, Thara, I'd like to take a belly-whopper, if you don't mind giving me your share of the sled for a little."

"Go ahead, dear. I'll watch you whopping from here."

With a run, Pegs flung herself, sled and all, upon the snow, jerking the sled to keep the road.

"Oo-oo! Wasn't that fine!" squealed Pegs as she dragged her sled back. "I only wish I had some one to haul my sled back for me."

She tried it some more to Spice's envy.

"You go like a bird," said the latter. "I think I'll try one, too."

"Ever done it before, Spice?" asked Pegs.

"Why, no. But I can, if you can."

"I've done it before, heaps of times, out at grandmother's. But I shouldn't try on this road, if I were you. You'll have to steer very carefully not to miss the bridge. If you do, good-night!"

"Don't you suppose I know that?"

"Well," said Pegs, "it won't do to know too much."

Spice jerked the sled towards her by its rope. She took the sled to her bosom and went. True, she hit the ground rather clumsily, but still she went, slowly, steering the sled successfully to the middle of the bridge.

"Now you see, missy," she said, as she came back, and forthwith became more reckless.

The third time she went down she said she would take a "ripper," and Pegs cleared the road for her. It *was* a ripper, in more senses than one.

Down went Spice, her great hulk making the sled creak as she landed on it, down the hill at a reckless speed. Her steering was a bit erratic and toward the foot of the hill the sled commenced to get out of control. The girls watched her, breathless, as she swerved to the right, going at full speed.

"Steer to the left!" cried Pegs sharply, raising her voice. But Spice could not hear or could not turn her sled.

"Ugh! there she goes over!"

A rattle and a crash came from the darkness to the right of the bridge, as the sled catapulted over the embankment. Then silence. Pegs came to her senses first.

"Come, quick!" she said to the other girls, and, as they started to run, she took a belly-whopper on her sled to speed through all the sooner.

Nearing the bridge, she dragged her foot and stopped the sled, and hurried over to the edge of the embankment. There was a dark bundle lying in the snow below.

She climbed carefully down the declivity that Spice had taken at top speed, headlong. A groan was her response.

"Are you badly hurt, Spice?" as she gently raised her head and turned her over. Thara and Julia were there, too.

"She must have hit her head," said Thara.

Then a sigh and Spice opened her eyes.

"I—I—must have broken every bone in my body," she said. "I can't move."

She had gone over the embankment in a heap, and had landed a few inches of the ice of the brook. Near by lay the sled—what was left of it.

"I hope it isn't so bad as that," said Pegs, remembering Spice's *avoirdufois* that might have acted as a buffer. "Anyway, I think you smashed every bone in the sled."

"This is no time to be funny," groaned Spice.

"I'm not trying to, honey dear. There, try to get on your feet a little if you can." And after a time the numbness and the shock of the fall having passed away, the girls helped Spice to her feet and then slowly up the embankment.

"Well, I guess I'm not exactly dead," said Spice, "but I thought I was a goner."

"My, but your face is all cut and bleeding," said Sarah, as they reached the moonlight.

"And I guess I'm bruised all over and maybe internally."

"I hope not," said Pegs. "Come, get on this sled and we'll pull you home."

On the front piazza a figure muffled in a shawl was waiting for them. It was Effie—Effie, who had not gone to sleep since the milk episode; Effie, who had heard them steal out and knew they were up to something new; Effie, who had watched over them from the front windows of the parlor, to see that no evil befell them; Effie, who went forward to lend a helping hand now that it had befallen.

"Come right in here to Miss Cooke's room," said Effie, as they led Spice up the steps. "Goodness, you have bruised yourself some, Miss Becker," as they went into the light of the hall.

The girls went as she told them, fear clutching their hearts now that they had been found out, and yet glad enough that somebody responsible was there to get Spice mended.

"I don't think you have any bones broken, thank fortune," said Effie after she had put Spice in the Morris chair under the drop light and felt her all over. "But you have a lot of bruises—My!"

"Is my face badly scratched?"

"It might have been worse," said Pegs. "Don't think of your beauty, when your head might have been dented."

"Effie—" put in Julia tentatively, "we've been dreadfully bad to-night, haven't we?"

“I should say you have! If Miss Cooke knew it, what would she say!”

“But Miss Cooke won’t know it, will she, Effie dear?” pleaded Pegs.

“Well,” said Effie thoughtfully, applying witch hazel liberally to a gauze bandage, “that depends on how good you are the rest of the time.”

“We’ll be good as gold,” assured Pegs, which was just what she had told Miss Cooke.

CHAPTER XVI

THE HEN VICTORIOUS

MISS COOKE did not return for a week. By that time Spice Becker, who was not seriously hurt, was pretty well patched up. But it was much harder than that to patch up the feelings of the Miller boys when they found their sled smashed like an egg-shell under the bridge. Spice's weight had done its work most sinisterly. It took all of Pegs' persuasion to salve their hurt feelings, together with relinquishing to the boys the title to a beauty of a sled which the village store-keeper brought to Journey's End the following Monday. It went to the Miller household under a thunder of protest from the Journey's Enders, and nothing but the promise of a prompt duplication of the sled (paid for from Pegs' allowance) could stay the storm.

They had no more wild frolics for a while at Journey's End, principally because there was a week crammed with recitations, with not much time to play.

But the Freshman class elections took place. No, there was not a great competition, for Ruth Hammond had done her work well and those Freshmen simply went and staidly voted for her for regular President of the Freshman class. Pegs Whiting, who threw her weight and votes for Ruth, was rewarded with the Vice-Presidency and with it the heading of

that all-important Executive Committee. One other glory came to Journey's End—Mary Hubbard was made Sergeant-at-Arms, that is, general factotum, keeper of order during the meeting, and picker up of innumerable scraps of paper from the floor after it was over! Poor Mary!

Only one other excitement occurred. On Wednesday the College had the indoor athletic meet at the Gymnasium, a sort of examination and exhibition of the gymnasium work for the semester, in which the four classes competed for points and the Gymnasium Faculty were very much in evidence.

The girls used muscle and grace and much chewing-gum. The Sophomores got the points, but the Freshmen caused the sensation of the day, with no less a person than—Mary Hubbard! She could climb up the long swaying ropes as a cat can up the back fence. They raced, Mary, a Sophomore, and two Juniors, but Mary passed them like a flash, chewing away on a piece of gum to keep her breath, and almost sitting on the top of the roof-beams. At least, she would have sat there if the Gymnasium instructor had not thought it unsafe, and called her down, as an organ-grinder does a monkey.

Mary famous again! Mary's stock went up one hundred per cent in a jump. The College were quick to appreciate talent in any direction and kept her climbing as long as they could without interfering with the other exhibitions. Mary's friends almost carried her on their shoulders to Journey's End.

"My dear, my dear," said Pegs, hugging the breath out of her, "and to think we never dreamed you had

it in you. How your roommate must appreciate you.”

“Her roommate would appreciate her more if she didn’t attempt to climb trees in her sleep. She nearly has me on the floor.”

“Well, anyway, it was a glorious victory, and something Mary ought to be congratulated for. How did you ever learn to do it?”

“Why, I was raised in the country, you know,” said Mary modestly, “and there are apple-trees and things there and we’ve always climbed. Besides, father was once a sailor.”

“I see, and you really inherit the gift.”

And then they remembered, those who had stayed over Thanksgiving, those marvelous sea tales of which they could not understand the source.

But the title of the chapter does not apply to this performance of Mary’s. For on Thursday came a telegram, forwarded from the Dean’s Office, addressed to:

“MISS EFFIE HADDEN AND THE GIRLS OF JOURNEYS
END.”

And this is what it said:

“BUFF ORPINGTONS JUDGED TODAY LADY HAMPDEN
BLUE RIBBON LORD ELMHURST THIRD

“CAROLINE COOKE”

Effie, having opened it while the girls were at recitations, kept it to be announced at the dinner table. The girls opened it with great ceremony and ado.

“Well, three cheers for old Lady Hampden,” said Lou Gaylord.

“And I picked her out,” said Pegs.

“And I lived to name her,” said Thara.

“But just think of the glory coming to Journey’s End!”

“That hen will live in pink and baby blue the rest of her life!”

“She’s a bird. She really is in many senses!”

“We’ll have to give her a banquet when she arrives!”

“Chicken salad tabooed! Or custard, or sponge cake, or anything containing any of Lady Hampden’s relatives.”

“Well, we might give Miss Cooke a reception. She’s a peach, really.”

“Let’s give a barn dance!” This from Thara.

“Well, of all the brightest things!” It was Pegs’ appreciation of her roommate.

The Committee were duly appointed, with Thara as Chairman, and Julia and Pegs. Effie was made honorary member, as she would have so much to do with the important part of the barn affair—the food. Effie received her appointment with a twinkle in her eyes—without that twinkle, Effie could never have lived so many years with all those rafts of Freshmen—and offered to give the best of her ability to make the spread a success and to provide eggless and henless products of the kitchen for consumption. Likewise would she coöperate in keeping them informed as to all Miss Cooke’s movements and plans, and she did—like a “brick.”

Miss Cooke was expected to arrive at about five o'clock on Saturday afternoon. They would be ready to receive her, and the barn dance was to take the place of the regular Saturday night dinner.

There was an air of mystery about the place, and everybody had a secret of her own. The Committee kept their counsel with a smug smile and would tell nothing. There were many trips to the village store and returns with queer-looking packages. The barn doors were shut and peek-proof. Effie said nothing, but smiled—and cooked. Jo Guilford helped her.

The family had secrets, too. Theirs was the one big announcement that was common property—they were to dress up as farmers and dairy-people.

Ye gods! Dress up! Do you know what that means in a college of girls? It is the very breath of their nostrils. Next to eating things they don't have to—between meals and after—"dressing up" is the one joy that is never passed over. And do you wonder at the tremendous bustle and flurry that existed since 4.30 that afternoon? The day before had been spent in hunting up and borrowing the proper make-up for their costumes from their friends on the Campus, if they themselves happened not to have it. You would be surprised at the queer things that find their way to college in a girl's trunk, just on speculation that she might some time find them useful.

There was a fluttering about and a squealing and laughing, and the hands of the clock turned all too slowly. Five o'clock came but no Miss Cooke, and it was not till 5.30 that an advance courier sent out to reconnoiter, returned out of breath and reported that

Miss Cooke had come in on that car and the automobile wagon was just pulling in.

With more laughter, the girls trooped out on the road, in the falling winter twilight, a band of farmers and farmers' wives arrayed in their best hayfield costumes, and the waving and cheering would have frightened the automobile had it been a horse. Miss Cooke, coming down the walk with her handbag, wondered, too, except that she knew it must be her girls out for some sort of a lark.

"Welcome home! Welcome home, Miss Cooke," they cried. "All hail, Lady Hampden! All hail, Lord Elmhurst!"

"Well—well—" said Miss Cooke, surveying the motley group under the stream of the automobile headlights. "I didn't expect *this* reception. Words fail me."

"Never mind, Miss Cooke," said Thara, "we won't ask you for a speech—till later. But you are kindly requested—you are requested kindly to go to the barn where the birds will be unloaded."

"Well—well, what *is* up?" was all that Miss Cooke could say, as the car turned into the road to the barn, escorted by the farmer-people. As they drew near, the doors of the barn were thrown open and strains of music came from the interior.

What a transformation! The barn had been carefully "policed" by the Committee, and a long table made of boards set on packing cases—loaded with food, *food!* on the white table cloth—held the middle and main part of the floor, while all around it stood boxes of all descriptions, for chairs. Overhead hung

streamers of crêpe paper—red and green, and big bow-knots of color on the barn doors and empty horse-stalls. One great lamp, that had always been there, and two lanterns furnished the light, and up in the hayloft, their legs hanging over and swinging with the rhythm, played the orchestra, home talent dressed in overalls—a violin and two mandolins:

“I was seeing Nellie ho-o-ome,
I was seeing Nellie home.
And 'twas from Aunt Dinah's quilting party
I was seeing Nellie home.”

“The two crates of prize birds will be put on those boxes in the stalls at the head of the table, there and there, on each side of you, Miss Cooke, if you don't mind,” said Thara, as the driver and his assistant were lifting the crates out, with broad grins.

“Them's certainly some birds,” commented the driver.

“They certainly are. We appreciate the honor of having them as guests.”

And when the car finally drove away and the great doors were closed upon the festive scene, the smiles grew broader and broader all around. For there sat pairs of farmer lads and lassies, the lads in overalls and jumpers and thick boots (if they were lucky) or galoshes, with immense straw hats covering their heads; the lassies in checked gingham dresses and sunbonnets, with pigtails hanging under, and enormous red sashes and bows.

The music ceased. Sarah, at the foot of the table, arose as toast-mistress, arrayed in a dress of pink gingham topped by a pink sunbonnet that offset her

dark hair and pretty face and made her look like a beautiful little girl on a calendar. And thus she spoke:

“This occasion has been—er—gotten up—in honor of Lady Hampden, the Queen of the Orpingtons—to say nothing of Lord Elmhurst—but ‘ladies first.’—And so we came out here to celebrate, most fittingly, the return of the prize birds, and though it is an ante-dinner instead of a postprandial speech, we want to say, before we do anything else, Long life and glory to the Hen Victorious.”

Miss Cooke smiled and tried to speak, but Pegs, sitting nearest her in an all-enveloping pair of overalls, saw that she was tired, and hastened to say: “We don’t expect a speech from you, Miss Cooke—not yet, anyway, because you must be very tired.”

“Well”—Miss Cooke laughed—“but I do want to say just two words.—Are you dressed warm enough to be out in the barn on this cold night?”

The remark brought down the house, and they hastened to assure her that they had sweaters under those gingham dresses and jumpers and that there were also two oil heaters burning in the barn that minute. And then Effie startled Miss Cooke by speaking suddenly at her shoulder, where she had been all the time, and saying she would bring the tea and biscuits now, if Miss Cooke was ready.

They all fell to the business before them—an eggless, chicken-less banquet that heaped the festive board. The orchestra alone, self-sacrificing persons that they were, sat up in the loft, eatless, swinging their legs and playing country dances and reels and “Annie

Laurie" and "Turkey in the Straw" till they were ready to drop, so they said. But finally, when Miss Cooke insisted, they ordered their meal "sent up to them."

"We like it up here," they said, and would not quit their loft.

Of course, everybody wanted to know all about the Poultry Show, and to see the blue ribbon, at which Miss Cooke smiled and began searching in her hand-bag.

"Lady Hampden has been judged the best hen in the country," she remarked proudly, exhibiting the trophy to their admiring gaze, "and I have the first prize money and the certificate in my bag."

"And how about the cockerel and the pullet?"

"'William Tell' and 'Spring Maid' won honorable mention."

"Which is well enough for young things like that," remarked Pegs.

The supper over and the banquet board having been depleted, they pushed away their "box-seats," dismantled the table and put the boards on end in the stalls. In the hayloft the "fiddlers" started up on some Virginia reel music and the party paired off and danced and clapped their hands to their hearts' content.

And the dust!

And what do you suppose Their Majesties did all this time? To them the antics were mysterious revels. Lord Elmhurst looked on the remarkable scene first with one eye and then with the other, and made guttural remarks to his mate. She also looked and

looked and agreed with him in a soft tone of voice. As for the cockerel and the pullet, they saw no sense in it at all, and retired early to a perch on the back of their cage, opening and shutting their eyes sleepily.

In between the dances Thara sang, and that lovely "Annie Laurie" made them sit and dream, enthralled.

By and by, after some more dancing, there was a flutter and a fuss at a side door of the barn and in came a Buff Orpington Chanticleer, all done in deep yellow crêpe paper, surmounted by a big rooster's head left over from some masquerade.

Chanty mounted a packing-case and did a clog-dance, and then a Highland fling, to the great appreciation of the audience. This was followed by "Loch Lomond" from Sarah.

Miss Cooke had disappeared when the dancing first began, for the poor lady was tired from her long trip. But, by and by, when the revelers were beginning to get exhausted and were willing to sit down a while and let the dust settle, Miss Cooke came in again and announced that it was past nine o'clock and didn't they think they were tired enough to go to bed?

They did—but, oh, they'd had a *glorious* time!

"Well, I'm sure Lord Elmhurst and Lady Hampden have appreciated the honors heaped upon them. They've been on a long journey and must now retire."

"Shall we help you put them in the coop, Miss Cooke?" asked Pegs, always ready to help.

"No," said Miss Cooke, "I think I'll leave them right in here in the crates till morning. They are used to them."

“Well, Lady Hampden is sure a beauty,” and Pegs pressed her face close to the slats. “Why, why—girls!”

Pegs was highly excited. Without so much as a by your leave, she intruded upon the privacy of the royal pair. She opened the little door in the front of the cage and thrust her arm inside.

And brought out an egg!

“Look, girls, look,” she cried. “The Crown Prince!”

CHAPTER XVII

THE WHEREFORE OF JOURNEY'S END

THE next great event in that month of January was the lifting of the quarantine. The Christmas vacation, instead of increasing the cases of influenza, had acted like the dynamiting of buildings in a conflagration, and that two weeks, barren of any chance to meet or transmit the disease at College, had put a stop to it altogether. The sick ones had convalesced and those that had contracted it on their vacations had stayed home to get well. Moreover, the outside world was rapidly recuperating and the disease was forced to loosen its hold.

And so, the quarantine was lifted. It meant trips to the City; it meant invitations out of town, unspoiled by having to squeeze out permission; it meant—oh, it meant visits from the outside world, so long postponed, looked forward to. The Sunday evening after the lifting of the quarantine was vesper service, and this was seized upon as an excuse for youths from everywhere to flood the Campus like a plague of grasshoppers. Unwelcome? Oh, no! The only trouble was to find some cozy, protected, as-private-as-possible corner in the public rooms of your dormitory for yourself and best young man. The matrons were overwhelmed with unusual requests for unusual permissions:

Diffident steps and soft knock on the matron's door—

“Mrs. ———, I have—er—a friend to-night and so have one or two more of the girls. Would you mind very much if we lit the log fire in the students' parlor and roasted marshmallows?”

“H—m,” clearing throat to gain time for thought, “why, I have no objections, if you leave things the way you found them and are quiet. The last party left the fireplace stuck with sweet stuff.”

“Oh, we'll be very careful. Thank you.”

Five minutes later. Another diffident approach and knock.

“Er—Mrs. ———, my cousin is here. We've made some Welsh rabbit and we'd like him to have some of it, but we don't know where to go,” maneuvering to get permission to have the party in her room.

“Er—h'm—you might take him to the reading room.” So decided this Solomon of matrons.

But what was happening in the halls, on the Campus, was happening at Journey's End. All the nooks and corners were so occupied that they overflowed and the parties merged into one another and had to pool interests, becoming one great party.

Over at Journey's End that afternoon, Pegs had her cousin Bill from Elmhurst, who had brought a clean, pink-faced, sandy-haired, sandy-eyebrowed young man with him—Mr. George Stoddard—which young man appropriated Sarah Thayer's side and remained immovable.

Spice, too, kept a firm-mouthed, dark-haired in-

dividual enthralled, and it may be noted that to-day she was unusually soft-spoken. Yearning for manly company will soften the hardest heart!

As for Mary—Mary, most certainly—she occupied the hall seat, where all the rubbers and galoshes were kept, with a moon-faced youth who could hardly be held at arm's length.

But do not think that this is the usual state of affairs at a girls' college. Remember that for almost two months the flood-gates had been held shut by an obdurate hand, and now, when suddenly they were thrown open, in came the tide with a rush, and all at once!

When they got tired of sitting, Bill remarked that they were dying to see Lord Elmhurst and Lady Hampden whom they had heard so much about. So the two couples went.

"Well, so that's the old fellow, is it?" exclaimed Bill, looking over the chicken wire. "Some chest!"

"And some voice," replied Pegs. "He crows in the middle of the night sometimes. I wonder what his idea is."

"Wants to be the first to welcome the rising moon, I suppose," said Bill.

"Rising moon? Rising wrath! Frances Crane lives in the back of the house, and now since the snow came on, she prepares snowballs and takes—"

"Takes them to bed with her?"

"No," laughing, "not exactly to bed—puts them in a row outside her window-sill, and you can hear them go 'thud' on the chicken coop roof when Lord Elmhurst wakes you up to sing in the middle of the

night.—Ah, there is Lady Hampden just coming out of the coop door.”

“She’s the lady that got the blue ribbon, is she? I don’t wonder—and I bet *she* doesn’t crow about it!”

“No,” laughed Pegs. “She is very modest.”

“And what do you think Miss Cooke is going to do?” put in Sarah. “She is going to sell her for a thousand dollars and give the money to the Endowment Fund.”

“Phew! One thing at a time is all my feeble brain will comprehend. One thousand bucks for a hen!”

“Why not?”

“Oh, yes. I almost forgot about your Endowment Fund since the Flu. Let me see, you are one of the thousand and one colleges—”

“That will do—quite,” commanded Pegs. “And I shall see that you do not forget our Endowment Fund hereafter.”

“I move,” said Sarah, “that all young men wanting to visit at Hampden College be made to pay toll at the gate.”

“Bright idea!” quoth the sandy-haired young man. “May I come again to-morrow?”

“Nothing slow about you, Reddy,” said Bill. “Don’t let him impose upon you, Miss Thayer; he’s a lady-killer.”

“Oh, I’m not worrying.”

“Now, Miss Thayer, Bill’s wrong; really he is. And I can be very useful.—I tell you what, Miss Thayer, some day, if you’ll let me, I’ll come over with a couple of pairs of snowshoes and we’ll go around here and I’ll teach you how to snowshoe.”

"I told you he was a lady-killer, Miss Thayer," said Bill. "You've had fair warning."

These two young men stayed for supper that evening. There was vesper service, as we have said, and Pegs found Miss Cooke and got permission to bring her guests.

"There," she said joyfully, "Miss Cooke says she will make room for you."

"That will be jolly," exclaimed Mr. Stoddard. He was looking forward to hearing Thara sing at vespers, but he also appreciated the opportunity of being allowed to stick a little longer at her side.

"May I give you some chicken salad, Mr. Stoddard?" asked Miss Cooke as the various couples were ranged about the table. "You see it is of our own breed."

"That is from Class CC, is it not, Miss Cooke?" inquired Pegs.

"Yes, this was a cock that flunked. His rank was especially low."

"So the stew pots for him," put in Bill.

"Exactly," laughed Miss Cooke; "which points a just moral."

"But alas, we can't cook the men who have never been useful in life," put in the Senior-opposite.

"The truly primitive woman speaks there, Miss Gaylord," remarked Bill, "or are you attempting to be Shakespearian?"

"Doesn't it really mean: if you can't be useful, be as useful as you can, or is that a Gallic witticism?" asked Miss Cooke.

"Which is the motto of Class CC," quoth Pegs.

"Speaking of Shakespeare," said Miss Gaylord, "how well do you know your 'Twelfth Night'?"

"I'm not a Senior yet," disclaimed Bill. "And I've never acted in it. But why 'Twelfth Night'?"

"If you did you would know the reason why this house was named 'Journey's End.'"

"Oh, tell us!" exclaimed Pegs. "We're dying to know."

"Shall we tell them, Miss Cooke?"

"You know you couldn't resist."

The girls wiggled expectantly in their chairs.

"It was named three years ago, on such an occasion as this, while I was Freshman here."

"What, Flu then, too?"

"No, the 'men.' Frances Demarest, then a Junior, came downstairs to the parlor for something. She ran into no less than six couples.

"'Goodness!' she cried, ready to run out again. 'This is surely "Journey's End"!"

"We all stared at her blankly.

"'Why so?' asked one of the boys.

"She laughed, stopped at the portières and looked back.

"'Because, as our old friend Bill Shakespeare says:

" "Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers' meeting." "

CHAPTER XVIII

THE WHITE HORSE, MAUD

THE winter was on full blast. It had waited late, but when it came it meant business. The snow that had ushered in Christmas had come to stay, and on top of it, two or three more snow-storms had added their quota, until it looked as though snow were a permanent institution.

On the Wednesday following the visit of the Elmhurst boys, the snow had fallen steadily all morning and the girls figured that it would make good snowshoeing in the afternoon when George Stoddard would come. But George was coming expressly for Thara and had specifically stated that he would bring with him two pairs of snowshoes, so Pegs considered herself outside of the joys of the game. For naturally, the second pair of snowshoes was meant for the pink young man who would thereby attach himself inseparably to Thara's side. Pegs could hardly expect that he would set her on them to paddle around with Thara, while he took the shallower snow-paths at a distance. Besides, there is something about two being company and—

Therefore Pegs decided to let the two enjoy themselves entirely alone—she knew that the youth, at least, would enjoy himself—and hit upon the very fine

idea of going sleigh-riding herself. As the chaperonage of a Senior was necessary to a Freshman, and as more than two in a one-horse sleigh was certainly a crowd, she invited only Lou Gaylord to accompany her, and planned to hire a team for that same Wednesday afternoon.

The night before, Pegs had interviewed Mr. Noah Simpson and he had agreed to send around that very docile white mare of his, yclept Maud. Maud must have been a sister to Mutt and Jeff, for she had the same ease-loving disposition, which made her a safe proposition for the girls to drive. Hence, Maud was very popular and much in demand at the College.

It was a beautiful snowstorm that set in, with big white flakes that floated about lazily here and there before they alighted. All morning they fell so thickly that the houses across on the Campus were almost obliterated, or were mere shadows looming up now and again. As the snow increased toward noon, Miss Cooke asked the girls, at lunch, if they thought it would be wise to go out driving in such a storm.

"Why, I think it's perfectly safe," said Pegs. "We've driven many a time in such a storm at Prep School. It really isn't a storm, and it's so jolly to be out in it, with the snow falling all around and lighting in your hair and coat. It's the real thing."

"I don't think we'll have any trouble," agreed Lou Gaylord. "We'll keep to the road and go on toward Elmhurst. It's perfectly plain to follow."

"If the landmarks are not obliterated," said Miss Cooke. "The snowstorm is a particularly thick one."

"Let us try it, anyway," persisted Pegs. "We won't go far and if we have any difficulty, we'll come right back. I wouldn't want to miss it for worlds."

After lunch the two girls got out heavy coats, sweaters, and furs, and even put on their galoshes. It was snowing merrily without, and what a wonderful time they would have! Ham was to bring Maud around at two o'clock, and there was a prospect of a fine long afternoon.

And then George Stoddard would come with his snowshoes and Thara would not be at all alone.

George did come, and with the snowshoes. Effie brought up the message that sent Thara into a flurry of prinking.

"Give him my love," quoth Pegs, as Thara disappeared down the stairs, giving a final rub to her newly powdered nose and a last pat to her brown beaver tam. In a few moments Pegs heard them go out of the front door and heard their snow-muffled steps down the front piazza.

"Give me a sleigh-ride in a storm like this, Lou," she said, turning to the Senior, "and I'll forswear all men."

"It is certainly wonderful," breathed Lou, as she watched the thick-falling flakes. "But I wonder what's become of that horse and sleigh. It was to have been here by two, and it's way past that now."

"I'll go down and see," volunteered Pegs. "I wish it *would* come." And she thumped downstairs in her galoshes.

In another moment she was hallooing to Lou outside the window,

"Oh, *Lou-oo!*" she called. "Come on down! The sleigh is here!"

When Lou Gaylord went down, there in front of the house, hitched to the wooden post, stood the white horse, attached to a sleigh.

"Here's Maud," called Pegs through the snowflakes. "Ham just brought her and hitched her here without saying a word."

"Stupid—just like him! Are you ready to go?" asked Lou. "Got everything?"

"Yes, everything. Only wish we had a thermos bottle along with hot coffee in it. It's getting colder."

"Yes, it is," said Lou. "Let's muffle up and start.—There goes Thara with her 'man.'"

"Save the mark!"

And out in the distance, almost blended out of sight in the snowflakes, they could see two figures floundering irregularly about.

They untied the horse and got into the sleigh, throwing a capacious laprobe around them. Pulling on her gauntlets, Pegs took the reins and clucked to the horse. Off it started with a jerk that almost threw the girls out backwards.

"Goodness, but she's spry all of a sudden! Whoa-whup, Maud," said Pegs. "What's the matter, old gal, been eating monkey-glands?"

Lou's haw-haw only sent her flying faster, but as she cut out into the Elmhurst road and seemed to know what she was about, Pegs gave her rein, knowing she would soon tire, dragging through the deep snow, and come to terms.

"This sudden celerity on the part of Maud is cer-

tainly a revelation," remarked Lou. "Some people surprise you when you least expect it."

"Like Mary Hubbard, for instance. I shouldn't be surprised, one of these days, if Mary should turn out to be some sort of genius."

"Well, I think we're due for some sort of surprise from Mary. She looks to me like a multiple personality."

"A what?" asked Pegs, winding the reins around her gauntlets and looking at Lou sidewise.

"We call it 'multiple personality' in Psychology. She's two people—one herself, the other somebody else. She has such a queer 'gone' look sometimes, you are not sure whether she's there or not."

"Poor Mary—she mostly is *not*. I suppose at those times the other personality *is*. I wonder which is worse. What would you say, old psychologist?"

"We haven't progressed far enough in 'Psyche' to find out yet. Some day I'll take Mary up to the laboratory and experiment on her. But my guess is that we'll find her to be either a genius or a murderer."

"Good heavens!"

This exclamation from Pegs was less regarding Mary's outcome than a sudden movement of the horse's head which almost pulled the reins out of her hands. Just as they turned round a corner, so to speak, in the road, a wind seemed to spring up suddenly that blew across their path and whipped the lazy flakes into a fury of scurrying snow. Maud did not like it any more than they did. She registered her dislike by a yank on the reins. It is one thing to

be comfortably ensconced in coats and furs and galoshes in a smooth, swift-moving, one-horse sleigh, but it is a far different thing to be that one horse that has to drag the same about, knee-deep, with the beat of the snow on the only coat Nature gave you.

"Maud doesn't like this," remarked Pegs, lowering her head, against the driving of the snow, which was now coming finer and biting the face and ears as it beat past.

"Well, I don't wonder," replied Lou, pulling her cap closer over her face. "I'm thinking maybe she has more sense than we have.—Look at her go! Better pull her in a bit."

"She's doing some pulling herself," said Pegs, squinting her eyes at the snow. "I couldn't hold her in. I didn't think she had the strength."

"Mr. Noah must have been feeding her. See how broad her shoulders and haunches have grown."

"I would if I could open my eyes. How dreadfully biting the wind has grown! Perhaps we had better stop and turn back."

Lou thought so, too, but although they suggested it to Maud several times, the word "whoa" seemed not to be in her vocabulary any longer. She only plunged forward the faster, as though determined to make a goal for Elmhurst.

It might have gone well while going fast, had it not been for a particularly vindictive gust of wind. There were great drifts in the road now, and one of these drifts the wind lifted bodily, just as Maud got abreast of it.

Maud side-stepped in fright, then reared. Her eyes flashed and her nostrils dilated in and out. She did not stop to see what it was that had risen against her. She was putting the miles between her and It. In fact, she was running away!

Pegs could not check her. Neither could Lou. Neither could their combined strength on the reins. Commands fell on deaf ears. Coaxings were redundant.

"She'll exhaust herself after a while," said Pegs, out of breath.

"After she's exhausted us and turned our hair gray.—Whoa! Maud, I say! Whoa!"

The futility of Lou's command struck Pegs funny and she laughed. Fatal laugh! The demons of chance just then hurled another snow-drift across Maud's path. She had been hugging the left of the road. This new gust made her veer still more to the left—and into the ditch.

She was in and out again. She merely floundered a bit. The girls were in and out, too—out of the sleigh.

Lou landed "soft" and Pegs might have, had she not persisted in keeping the reins. She was dragged along, the sleigh bouncing on its side, perilously near her head. The white horse was not to be stayed.

When Lou came to the realization of what had happened to her, and was ineffectually brushing away the snow that filled her neck and face and hair, she remembered Pegs and the sleigh. She stumbled to her feet.

Ten yards away from her they were, plunging ever

forward in a confusion of flying white as they plowed away the snow. Maud was not to be halted, and Pegs held on to the reins.

Lou realized what Pegs did not. Pegs must let go; but how to get clear without being hammered as the sleigh passed over? And yet, either way there was danger.

"Pegs! Pegs!" she called. "Let go the reins! Throw yourself out!—Pegs, Pegs! Let go!"

Pegs did not seem to hear, but Maud did. She girded herself for a sprint—and sprinted. She bounded forward at Lou's cries. The reins were jerked out of Pegs' numb hands. The same jerk hurled the sleigh to one side. God helps them that cannot help themselves. Maud and the sleigh were going ad infinitum.

"Oh, Pegs, Pegs, are you hurt?" cried Lou, floundering toward the still prone figure. She went on her knees beside her, and putting her arms around her, raised the girl gently. "Are you hurt?"

Pegs came to herself and sat up, dazed, in a whirl of loose hair and hairpins.

"I—I guess my brains aren't knocked out," she commented, feeling her disheveled head—"because I never had any."

"I guess you're all right," laughed Lou nervously, "if you talk like that."

"But as for my hair—where did I leave it?"

Lou was supremely relieved. She helped to brush away the snow that covered Pegs completely and was draining down her neck.

"Goodness! That Maud literally made me eat

snow! I wonder where she has gone to—and what will Mr. Noah say?”

“He’ll say we ‘hadn’t oughter have gone.’ But don’t worry about that now. Try to get up, and let’s see if you have any bones broken.”

“I think not,” said Pegs, rising painfully. “Thanks to the snow. But I ache all over.—That’s just what Miss Cooke will say.”

“That you ache—”

“That we shouldn’t have gone.—Look at it snow!”

They were aware for the first time, as they slowly walked back, that the snow was still beating upon them and that the wind was driving whirls of snow searchingly about them.

“It is worse than ever.—Here’s my tam and two more hairpins, thank fortune. Maybe my hair will stay up now.—What’s this?”

“The laprobe, I declare!” said Lou, digging out the black thing in the snow-pile. “I think I fell in it. That’s why I’m alive.”

“I feel like one of those lost sheep in the picture,” said Pegs, looking about uncertainly. “There is no road to be seen.”

“I think we’re still on it,” reassured Lou. “Let’s go on back and so long as we don’t go into a ditch, right or left, we know we’re on the road.”

“Is that higher mathematics? I never knew before that a ditch was such a good compass,” laughed Pegs. “But your logic sounds right. And by the same token, if we get snowed under, this laprobe will keep us from freezing.”

“You are very lugubrious, dear. Don’t—But let’s

get on. It is past four," consulting her wrist watch. "It has taken us an hour to fly out here, so it will take us *hours* to flounder back. And it will be getting dark soon."

"It's a good thing we have our galoshes on," remarked Pegs, picking up her skirts and plunging along. "I think that horse must have a multiple personality."

"Yes, I wonder where she'll land."

"She might freeze to death.—It's really getting very cold, Lou. We'll need that laprobe yet. Poor Maud—br-r-rr! She has nothing but the sleigh to wrap around her."

"She was doing that very successfully when I last saw her.—It *is* cold, though. Let's get close together and put the laprobe around us, over our heads."

"The snow is so thick you can't see ahead of you," said Pegs, as they trudged on again, under the big sheltering robe.

How long they went, they knew not. The white waste was as expansive as the North Pole. It grew colder and colder and the wind heaped piles of snow upon their improvised tent. And darkness came—all the sooner because of the pall of cloud and snow that overhung the earth. The shapes of the rail fences, that loomed up now and then along the road to guide them, were becoming undiscernible and they had to trust to a tentative foot on the brink of a ditch to tell them the way.

"The Babes in the Woods had nothing on us," remarked Pegs flippantly. "I wish I had some hot cocoa—or some fudge."

"Thank God for the laprobe, anyway. But if we don't get somewhere soon," remarked Lou, "we'll have to dig in and cover ourselves with it."

"Goodness, Lou, you're not weakening, are you? That's the first symptom of freezing to death."

"No," laughed Lou. "But it must be dreadfully late. And it's pitch dark."

"Hasn't your watch a luminous face?"

"Right you are. My cousin Ed had it in the trenches with him.—Half-past five!"

They looked at each other—or rather in each other's direction—in dismay.

"Do—do you think we'll get anywhere?" asked Pegs. "Or are we going around in circles?"

"Well, we're not going around in circles—I'm not, anyway, for I've been on the verge of the ditch on my side several times. We'll get there—if we walk long enough."

"Oh, for a cup of coffee and one of Effie's doughnuts!"

"Or two or three doughnuts, for that matter. I'm really hungry!"

"Don't let's talk about it. We might get cannibalistic. Br-r-rr!"

For a while they trudged along in silence and in darkness. They had every chance to enjoy a snow-storm in all its native wildness. And they did. Now and again they stopped to rest, and dropped the laprobe down and let the wind and snow beat upon their faces and ears. They were experiencing the grandeur of the elements, Lou said.

"I wonder if we've missed the road and got upon

a crossing road. Watt's Corners ought to be somewhere near by now," said Pegs.

"I don't think we've gone wrong. There is no fork on this road *till* Watt's Corners. We ought to be near it. We'll go to one of the houses—"

"When we get there.—Come, let's put the laprobe over us again and go on. Let's put on speed. This will never do!"

"I wish we had a sleigh."

"No, thank you.—Not so soon after."

"Well, I wish we had something—"

"If wishes were bicycles, beggars could ride."

"They do, nowadays—in autos. It's the poor middle class like us that give them the pennies, who can't afford it."

"Phew, this is warming work!"

"Speaking of autos, there's one ahead of us now. See its lights?" said Lou.

"Wrong you are, old guesser!" cried Pegs in glee, dropping the robe and commencing to dance around Lou and to hug her. "Don't you see what that is? It's no searchlight, but a good old New England lamp, and in a house, Glory be!"

And Pegs, quick of perception, was right. The light they saw glimmering through the falling snow grew larger as they plowed toward it. They discerned a little old cottage under its white blanket of snow, and a cozy warmth of light issuing from a window.

They stumbled up the front step and pulled a bell. The door opened and the girls tumbled in, together with a gust of snow that greeted the old man who opened the door for them.

CHAPTER XIX

THE RESCUE

MISS COOKE was worried. As the afternoon advanced and the wind and beat of the snow grew more furious with the fall of twilight, and still Lou and Pegs did not return, she was decidedly alarmed. She had let them go against her better judgment and now what she had feared—well, she hoped and prayed had not happened.

Dinner-time came and still they did not return, and when the ringing of the dinner bell brought down a responsive clatter of heels on the stairs, the repeated questions of investigation brought only surprised looks on the faces of the other girls, and negative answers.

Sarah was worried, too, and so was the youth who basked in her radiant presence—when he had time to think. But he was staying on for dinner before braving the storm again, so he had everything to be happy about.

Inside was warmth and light and hot food, in that cheerful dining room. Only now and again came the muffled rattle of a clogged window sash, as the wind drove sheets of snow against the panes and poked little drifts under the crevices. Everybody might have been supremely happy had they not been so anxious. Every once in a while the laughter would stop and they would listen for the sound of hoofs and sleighbells.

But dinner was over and nothing came. Outside, in front of the fire-place in the hall, they held council. Something must have happened to the girls, or the growing blizzard had driven them indoors somewhere. It was decided that Miss Cooke should call up all the houses she knew along the Elmhurst Road that had telephones and find out if anything had been seen of Lou and Pegs. Failing this, a search party would be organized, led by George Stoddard and such villagers as would go, and George offered his two pairs of snowshoes to the cause.

Those who were really anxious adjourned to the kitchen with Miss Cooke and crowded about the telephone.

"No, the girls had not been seen."

"No, no sleigh had passed all day going to Elmhurst."

"They were too far from the road to see much in that storm, but they hadn't noticed anybody."

Finally one house replied, to the prompting of a small boy, who had been out building a snow fort by the woodshed, that a sleigh with a white horse had passed, going "lickety-split." He thought there was nobody in it and that was funny, because going sleighs always have somebody in them. Only this one was sort of topsy-turvy, and topsy-turvy sleighs couldn't hold anybody.

"Good heavens!" from George Stoddard, when Miss Cooke had hung up the receiver. "I was afraid of it!"

"Do you think something happened to them?" asked Sarah.

"Well, the kid said the sleigh was 'topsy-turvy' and

going 'lickety-split.' I'm afraid the horse ran away with them."

"Oh!"

"They may be lying injured somewhere on the road, or trying to get back," said Miss Cooke. "This is dreadful. We must do something."

"That house you called up last, Miss Cooke?"

"That is way on toward Elmhurst. If it had only happened near some house."

"Do you think they are lying injured somewhere?" asked Mary. "Perhaps they'll be snowed under and—and be found in the morning in some drift, froz—"

"Don't! Don't say it!" commanded Spice Becker. "What a lugubrious imagination you have sometimes!"

"That is not beyond possibility," said Miss Cooke solemnly. "This is a blizzard."

"I opened the kitchen door a moment ago to put out the rubbish," said Effie, "and the wind nearly knocked me over. It drove in such piles of snow, I had to slam the door quickly."

"This is dreadful, dreadful!" cried Sarah, almost in tears. "What shall we do? What shall we do?"

"D-d-don't you worry, Miss Thayer," George hurried to assure her, "we will organize a search party at once. There are plenty of snowshoes in town and plenty of men. And we'll take lanterns and pocket flash-lights. There—I'll get into my coat at once and go over to the village store."

"Oh," put in Spice Becker, "but won't it be dangerous for you?"

"Not when two girls are drifting about alone on an open highway, in a driving blizzard."

"Mr. Stoddard is right," commended Miss Cooke, "and it's fine of him to go."

"Lou and Pegs might even have been killed," suggested Mary tremulously.

"It is dreadful to think of," said Miss Cooke, her voice shaking. "Come, I am going, too. Mr. Stoddard, wait for me."

"Oh, no, no!" protested George. "This is not a woman's job."

"Nonsense! I've been over some of the steepest mountains in Norway, above the snow-line, and a little storm like this won't hinder me. I'll get into my barn-dress and put on that heavy ulster and galoshes. And there are skis in the barn."

"It's a driving blizzard, Miss Cooke," protested Effie, putting a restraining hand on Miss Cooke's shoulder; "you really mustn't."

Nobody doubted Miss Cooke's rugged ability for a moment. It was only the idea of an elderly woman going out to face the blinding snow when there were men in plenty.

She waived their objections aside and was telephoning to Deacon Chase and to Mr. Streeter and other ready minute-men. They would be in their boots—they would harness a horse to their sleigh—they would be ready in five minutes.

It was with mingled eagerness and misgivings that the girls saw Miss Cooke and George Stoddard, all muffled, go out of the front door to meet at Mr. Streeter's house on the corner. Shivering, the girls stood in a swirl of snow on the piazza or put their heads outside of the half-open door and called after

the pair that shuffled along. At the top of the street appeared lights, and the jingle of sleighbells was wafted down on the wind.

“There’s Deacon Chase! Here he comes with his sleigh!”

“Wait, Miss Cooke! Leave your skis and ride in his sleigh!”

Miss Cooke and George stopped and waved their lantern as the steady jog of the sleighbells came nearer and nearer.

“Have some hot tea ready and something to eat, Effie,” called back Miss Cooke to Effie, who, drawing her little crocheted shawl about her, was cramming the windy doorway shoulder to shoulder with Mary Hubbard. “We shall need something hot when the girls get back.”

“Yoo-hoo-oo! Yoo-hoo-oo!” The halloo came from the approaching sleigh.

“That you, Deacon Chase?” called back Miss Cooke.

“No, it’s Tompkins of Watt’s Corners.”

“Oh, what brings you here in this storm, Mr. Tompkins?” exclaimed Miss Cooke. “You haven’t—”

“I’m bringin’ somethin’ to yeh!”

And then they noticed the bundle wrapped in a great laprobe and huddled at his left. Which bundle detached itself from his side as the sleigh reached the place where Miss Cooke and George were standing and flew at Miss Cooke in two separate parts and hugged her.

“Why—why—” exclaimed Miss Cooke in confusion, trying to collect her thoughts. “We thought maybe

you were killed or lost in the storm—What has happened? What has happened?”

“Everything! Everything! And Mr. Tompkins rescued us like a good Samaritan.”

“Do come indoors! And Mr. Tompkins, put your horse and sleigh in the barn and come in for something to eat and drink. Effie!”

There was great rejoicing and dancing about the returned pair. Dancing was not originally a form of art. It was an instinct—the expression of the joy of the soul. And so it was now—a sort of joyful, inarticulate dancing around the two girls, who could barely kick the snow off their overshoes or shake it out of their hair, trying all the while to explain what had happened, between hugs.

Mr. Tompkins went up the road to explain to the would-be rescue party that all was well and then returned to attend to his horse. Miss Cooke was bustling between the kitchen and the fire-place in the hall, where she laid on more logs of wood. In a few moments Mr. Tompkins was pounding the snow off his boots on the back steps and Miss Cooke hastened to bring him in to the warmth of the fire-place.

“We really don’t want supper, Miss Cooke,” said Pegs. “Mr. Tompkins fed us, like a good angel. Only some hot coffee, Effie, for we’re all chilled through again.—If only we could give some to your horse, Mr. Tompkins.”

“I’ve fixed him up all right in the barn, with two blankets. And I took the liberty of lightin’ the oil stove, Miss Cooke.”

"It's quite all right, Mr. Tompkins.—Here's the coffee—and then you can tell us what happened to you."

"Why, Maud saw something and ran away."

"Who's Maud?" questioned George Stoddard, leaning forward.

"Why, the white horse Mr. Noah sent over."

"With the sleigh?—That wasn't Maud—that was Beelzebub."

"Well, she acted like it," said Lou, eyes open in astonishment. "Mr. Noah said he would send Maud around at two o'clock and Ham brought her and hitched her outside to the post."

"But that was not his horse or sleigh, Miss Gaylord," persisted George.

"No," piped up Mary Hubbard furtively. "I—I—Ham told me this morning—I was down cellar in the laundry when he came to fix the furnace—He said Mr. Noah said—he—he didn't think he had ought to send Maud around to-day, being as he thought it was too much like a storm, and you hadn't ought to go out yourselves."

"What!" from the two girls. "Why didn't you tell us?"

"I—I forgot."

There was too much tragedy in Mary's tone and in her face to do aught but look at her. And they did, open-mouthed, for fully two minutes. Then the imp of comedy began to tickle their funny-bones. Realization was dawning.

There was a wild whoop from the girls, joined by Mr. Tompkins' guffaw.

“Well—well—” began Pegs. “If the horse we took was not Maud, who was it?”

“Beelzebub. You ran away with my horse,” said George, “and he ran away with you.”

“Well—well—I snum, as Deacon Chase would have said,” exclaimed Pegs. “That accounts for his strength and his activity—”

“And his gait—and temper—and Jekyll and Hyde personality.”

“I wonder—” put in Pegs, “his second personality must be freezing now—the Hyde part of it.”

“A—pun my word!” and Lou set the crowd laughing.

“But you really were not hurt?” asked Miss Cooke anxiously. “No bones broken?”

“My head almost was,” laughed Pegs, enjoying her own subtle joke. “I thought his Beelzebub Highness would have had me scrambled in another minute.”

“But it’s all over now,” breathed Lou. “‘That they overwent, this also may I,’ as the old poet says.”

“Well,” said George. “Now the excitement is over and you are safe, I wonder what became of Beelzebub?”

“He must have left us well on towards Elmhurst, if I calculate his speed rightly,” said Lou. “An hour longer and we’d have been up at the North Pole.”

“I—I don’t know what to do,” said the unfortunate George. “If you will permit me, Miss Cooke, I’ll telephone to the livery stable at Elmhurst. Beelzebub’s master is another Beelzebub, and it’s ‘Hail Columbia’ for me.”

They would have liked to hear that tune to which

poor George had to dance, but propriety forbade. George, however, was so absent-minded as to leave the door to the kitchen open, and they could not help hearing his part of the conversation. They frankly listened.

“Mr. Smart—Yes, Mr. Smart—”

“Yes, this is George Stoddard—”

“Well—well—well—”

“Oh, he got there?”

“Well, I can’t help it. Now, now! He ran away and nearly broke a girl’s neck. I wish he’d broken his own neck. I would have been glad—he’s a—a fiend!”

“Now, now, I’ll pay for the sleigh!”

“Kindling wood! Well, I said I’d pay—didn’t I? Let up!”

“Now, now! Don’t do that! I’ll see the Dean myself. Now, Mr. Smart—Oh, I say!—”

“No, I didn’t have a dickens of a time. I—I— Oh, laws!”

George hung up the receiver with a rattle.

“But he says I will when I get there,” they heard him mutter.

The girls were giggling when poor George came back from the kitchen.

"I—I think I'll have to start for Elmhurst now, Miss Cooke. It was so good of you to keep me."

"How are you going to get back, son?" asked Mr. Tompkins. "On snowshoes?"

"By train."

"My dear boy, there isn't a car running to get you to the train in the first place. And I doubt if there's any train. If you hadn't a got here by sleigh this afternoon, I misdoubt if you could have gotten here all day—by train or trolley."

"But—but—what shall I do? I've got to get home."

"Not in a roarin' blizzard."

"Certainly he is not going to stir from this house," Miss Cooke burst forth. "Mr. Stoddard, we should be pleased to have you remain as a guest at Journey's End."

"But—but—This is mighty fine of you, Miss Cooke, but how can I accept your invitation?"

"You can't do anything else, son. Listen to it go!" The wind was shaking shutters heavy with snow, and the cold swish still drove intermittently against the windows. "If I'd a-known how bad it was, I'd never a-come out with these two young ladies to-night. I'd a-made them stay at my house. But, bein' as I had no telephone, I just decided to pick 'em up and fetch them here, so's you wouldn't worry."

"Mr. Tompkins, you mustn't go out again to-night, either," said Miss Cooke. It was most comfortable indoors and even Buff had come and joined the group around the fire-place, claiming his mistress' lap as the most comfortable place in all the house. "Would your

family worry if you didn't go back in this storm? You really must stay."

"Well, I don't know's they will. I told 'em I might put up in the village, if it snowed too bad, and start back in the morning."

"There, there, nothing could be better. You and Mr. Stoddard shall have my rooms—there's the bed for you, Mr. Tompkins, and the couch in my study I'll make up for Mr. Stoddard."

"But you, Miss Cooke?" protested Mr. Tompkins.

"There's a spare room upstairs I always take when there's company. Come, you go and unharness your horse, Mr. Tompkins, and put him up for the night in one of the stalls. It hasn't been occupied since I sold Frank five years ago, but there's straw there and new oats, and everything you want."

"Oh, but, Miss Cooke, this is too much for you," protested George. "I feel as if I'm intruding. I can't put you to all this discomfort. And b-besides, I don't know if it's qu-qu-quite the thing for me to stay in a girls' d-d-dormitory." George's face was as red as the fire. He—he had to say it, and before all those girls, too! The next moment peals of laughter made him drop his face in confusion.

"I'm enough chaperon for you, son," put in Mr. Tompkins. "I'm sure I have no objections to the young ladies.—Thank you, Miss Cooke. I certainly will accept your hospitality most gladly. I'll go out now and put up my horse for the night. It's lucky for me you have such a fine barn. But I hate to drive you out of your comfortable bed."

"There's only one who has any objection, Mr.

Tompkins," said Miss Cooke, rising, the big yellow cat in her arms, "and that is Buff. There's a particular spot on my bed that he insists on as his own. He hates the room upstairs—But he's a good sport, Mr. Tompkins.—Aren't you, boy?" And dropping him into Pegs' lap, Miss Cooke went toward her own apartments to get the beds ready.

"Well—well—" said George, scratching his pale yellow hair, "I—I think I'll telephone home to my roommate now, or Bill won't know what happened."

And then they heard him get Elmhurst and call for Bill Stevens.

"Oh—hello!"

.

"Hello—yes, old boy."

.

"I'm perfectly safe. I'm not killed. I'll explain."

.

"Sorry I worried you so when the horse came back."

.

"I'm snowbound at Hampden College, and Miss Cooke insisted on my staying here to-night."

.

"Yes, Journey's End."

.

"Quit your laughing, Bill, it's no joke."

.

"Say, listen for a minute! I want you to telephone to the Dean and tell him I'm held up at Hampden, and that they want me to stay with them till the roads are clear to get back."

.

“It’s a fearful blizzard out. Ever see anything like it?”

.

“Quit your fooling and listen before we’re cut off.—Somebody borrowed my sleigh and Beelzebub, and his Highness Beelzebub ran away and dumped them—”

.

“Sure! That’s the honest truth! And then Beelzebub hiked it all the way home to Elmhurst with bits of the sleigh clinging to the harness.”

.

“Yes, I know he is—Smart’s as mad as a hornet. Tell the Dean before he does.”

.

“Oh, I know—I know. I’ll explain all that when I see you.—Go on now, and call up the Doc, like a good boy.”

.

“I know what’ll happen if Smart gets his ear first. Ugh, I’m in for it anyway!”

.

“No, I wasn’t killed! But, oh, laws, I will be when I get back!”

CHAPTER XX

SNOWBOUND

SNOWBOUND! What a wonderful feeling of being cut off from the rest of the world by flying snow—with barely enough food in the house to carry you along safely; of other houses being in a similar predicament, each having to make the best of it, a lone unit.

The next morning the College awoke to such a state of affairs. All around it was white and silent, with only the swirl of the wind and snow. But there were broad smiles at breakfast, and not a "grind" could be found unhuman enough to lament the fact that there could be no recitations that day. For the President's secretary had telephoned the news to every house during the breakfast hour.

Journey's End, too, received the message. There was almost a war-dance!

Mr. Tompkins was up and doing very early. After hitching his horse and partaking of the hot breakfast Effie had laid out for him on the kitchen table, he started back to his own home "to dig them out," so he said, telling the still disheveled George Stoddard that he would be back for him as soon as it "let up" and would take him down to the railroad station.

There was an air of Sunday about the house. Breakfast was eaten leisurely and the fire in the hall

was lighted. Ham did not come to attend the furnace or feed the chickens, so George volunteered his services at shaking the fire and coaling it. Out in the backyard Pegs, Thara, Mary and Julia, closely wrapped in mufflers and coats and wearing galoshes, took turns at a snow shovel and a coal shovel, making a path for Effie and Miss Cooke to reach the barn and the hen-coops. Not that the snow "stayed put"; it almost at once drifted to the very spot from which it had just been so laboriously removed! But at last there was a fair semblance of a pathway. The girls realized that chickens as well as people have to be fed, and they couldn't see either Effie or Miss Cooke making it in either skis or snowshoes, although the latter assured them that she had used them in Norway. It wouldn't be quite dignified for a house-mother, thought Pegs—and Pegs was an authority on dignity!—to feed chickens in that way! Sport was another thing!

Toward eleven o'clock the wind suddenly dropped and the snow eased off. Those who had been grouped around the piano trying the latest dances hurried to the window at a call. The girls pointed to the scene which was very lovely. Across lay the Campus, buildings, trees and wires snow-laden. The grove beyond Science Hall was a white canopy of piled-up snow, and the bushes and fir-trees assumed every form of snow-sculptured art.

"What beautiful pictures nature can paint with never the least effort!" breathed Thara, the emotional.

"I think I'll go and get my camera and snap it," answered Pegs, the practical. "Such pictures don't

last forever." And she went indoors for her kodak.

The crowd came out with her, ready to have their pictures taken, and Spice insisted on posing in George Stoddard's snowshoes.

"Well, of all things!" exclaimed Julia, as they were stepping out. "It's freezing!"

Sure enough, the last of the snow that had been falling was soft and wet, practically sleet. As it touched the other snow it froze, so that a glistening coat was beginning to glitter and cover everything.

"Well—" exclaimed George, "I see my finish! If the snow packs before they can sweep it off the tracks, swell chance I'll have of getting home."

"Oh, well," said Pegs, "I should think you'd be entertained with our aviary."

"What do you mean?" queried Spice laughingly. "Our Sarah and her singing?"

"No," drawled Mary, most seriously, "she must mean our singing of jazz music."

"Who said you were the wit of this party?" demanded Spice. "I didn't think you had it in you."

"You never think, anyway," said Julia.

"Let's change the subject," broke in Pegs. "The atmosphere is getting involved. I think it *will* pack, and we can have some glorious fun, coasting and all sorts of things—to say nothing of sleighrides."

"I'd say nothing about sleighrides if I were you," said Julia.

"I didn't mean that kind of sleighride. But surely we can have skiing, snowshoeing, and coasting.—Oh, bully!"

“Who’s that waddling across the Campus on snowshoes?” asked Thara. “Looks like Fanny Ward. Saw her once before on the things. She does waddle exactly like an overgrown duck. It’s her gait, all right.”

“I didn’t know any one could retain their individual gait on snowshoes,” said Julia. “But it is Fanny Ward. She’s coming here.”

Fanny Ward was the president of the Students’ League and by far the most popular girl in the College. Incidentally she was a great athlete and could outrun and outjump any one, and had given three championships and two sprained ankles to the cause. She was now coming along the top of the snow with slow, measured tread, followed by a satellite Freshman who had blessed her luck in possessing a pair of good snowshoes since they gave her a chance of joining Fanny Ward in her hobby.

“Is Miss Cooke in?” called Fanny, as she drew near. “I suppose I hardly need ask,” she added.

“You’ll find her in the barn,” answered Pegs, who had just snapped the noted Senior. “Thanks for posing for me.”

“Don’t mention it.—Better all get to practicing for the Carnival.”

“Carnival?”

“Snow Carnival. Next Saturday. You’ll see it posted on the bulletin board in the post office. Under the auspices of the Athletic Association. Snowshoe, ski, and other races, a wonderful parade and a grand snow-fight of the Odds against the Evens. Go down to the post office, somebody with snowshoes, and get the details.”

Fanny Ward was out of breath by the time she reached the barn, but her voice could still be heard as she turned the corner.

Perhaps a terrific snowfall is not very conducive to recitations especially when the paths cannot be cleared, but certainly when it has stopped after word has gone out that there are no classes, it does contribute to the finest possible holiday. And this particular holiday was dedicated to practice for the Carnival. The girls left their cozy corners and their hugging of the big log fires in the various student houses and went out into the living air.

All over the Campus they were hastily organized by classes into teams and under a good pitching leader were doing "target practice." And individual girls could be seen practicing energetically against sides of houses, barns and what not.

At Journey's End they were most energetic. Mr. Tompkins had come after luncheon with word that the road had been dug out and trains were running, so George Stoddard could have no further excuse for staying, although he was so helpful with advice on the Carnival contest that they were all loath to have him go. The College workmen had cut a path to them with the snowplow, and delegations of Juniors and Freshmen from other houses kept coming up.

"The Odd classes must win, girls! They must!" commanded one excited Junior, Nancy Larkin, who was official cheer leader and had been a one-time famous "south-paw" pitcher for her class baseball team. "Come on with me; I'll show you." And out they

all hied for the side of the barn, which she had suggested.

“Ugh! We can do better than that,” said Pegs. “Let’s aim at a star, rather.”

“What have you been reading?” asked Spice. “Miss Larkin means to put a target there.”

“And everybody will draw prizes—even booby prizes. No! No!”

Miss Cooke, who happened to be passing, put her veto on the side of the barn, too, for she feared that the thud of the balls might disturb her chickens, besides doing no end of other damage.

“So there!” cried Pegs. “I’ll tell you what. Let’s make a snowman and lam him with snowballs.”

Which they proceeded at once to do, as scientifically as their varied natures would permit them.

“I say,” said Pegs, after she had managed to hit the snowman several times in succession, “this is no fun. Nobody *wants* to be snowballed. They dodge and duck and run. Let’s have a moving target the way they do in the Navy.”

“What do you mean?” from Nan Larkin.

“Somebody runs and the rest try to hit her while moving.”

“Great!” approved the Junior. “Go on, Pegs, you take command.”

“Fine thing!” seconded Spice. “Here, Mary, you be the moving target!”

“No, sir!! I don’t want to be any ‘moving target’!”

“Aw, Mary, have some patriotism,” pleaded Pegs. “How can we win if we don’t have a ‘moving target’?”

Do you suppose the Evens are going to stand and let us hit them?"

"Don't be a coward, Mary," from Julia.

"What's the matter with some more moving targets? Several of 'em. There's more than one Even."

"Oh, well, we will be later," said Spice. "Get ready when we say 'go'!"

"Just one minute," said Pegs, who saw justly sometimes when the others failed. "Do you suppose the Evens are going to let us hit them without hitting back? Mary gets a handicap of ten snowballs while we make ours one at a time."

"That's only fair," said Thara.

"Well, I'm willing," said Mary, and proceeded to get her ammunition together.

There was a twinkle of mischief in her eye as she picked up the snowballs on her arm.

"Go!"

Mary went. She ducked the volley that came after her and most of the balls went wild. On her own part, she let fly her snowballs while the others were stopping to make more, and in the solid phalanx that confronted her she registered three hits.

"Good for the target!" shouted Pegs, shaking the snow out of her neck.

"Who *is* the target, did you say?" protested Spice, who being a broad target, could hardly be missed. "I don't like snow in my mouth."

"Be a sport, Spice," said Pegs. "Mary is a good pitcher, I guess. I'll tell you what we'll do for the snowball fight. We'll send out a decoy, like Mary,

close up to their line, with a bunch of snowballs. That will draw their fire on one, and maybe she will go down a martyr. Meanwhile the rest of us will get closer and let fly. While they're bunched up, you are bound to hit some one. We'll keep a scattered formation and we'll stand less chance of being hit. And you know, once you're hit, you're down and out."

Pegs was a keen observer and quick to note why Mary had scored a victory. Inadvertently, too, she subconsciously recalled things she had read of mass formation during the late war, and she was quick to make the best practical use of any ideas that came her way.

"You'll do," said Nan Larkin. "I guess I'll go on the Campus and pass on your idea to the Odds. Keep it dark, though. We ought to win. We must!—So long. Don't forget the Grand Procession. Want to make up your minds about the costumes."

They forgot nothing.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SNOW CARNIVAL

THE rest of that day and the next there were preparations, and whispered debates in corners, and practice of all sorts all over the Campus. Every house had a secret from every other—what they were going to do and to be in the Grand Procession. Recitations? Why, yes, of course, and there was studying, too. But there was still time in between and at all sorts of odd intervals to plan and to discuss, and borrow—such curious things!

More than that there was time for real sport. Down the “bracket man’s hill” there was great coasting, for the snow had packed and made a glorious road. All sorts of sleds and bobs made their appearance, and that “belly whopper” flying down was just as apt to be a College girl as a village boy. Coasting knew neither caste nor sex. The village was out, and so was the College.

Back on Pageant Hill, beyond the grove, however, there was a different kind of coasting—the sport of the more venturesome. Out here appeared dustpans, brooms, barrel staves, serving trays and clothes baskets from the cellar.

Have you ever tried these vehicles in coasting down a hill? You just gather your skirts about you, and make yourself as small as possible to fit on the pre-

carious seat. You clutch the small handle of the dustpan, or whatever the thing is, take a long breath, and away you go! You may finish the slide successfully; you may land half way, on top of your vehicle which has made some queer and sudden turn-about; or the landing may not be at all graceful or presentable. You have aimed at a star, as Pegs might have said, and you have gotten there upside down. And there is the glory of recklessness tugging at your heart and making your breath come the faster, especially if you knew that the matron of the house must have missed her dustpan by the time you returned, and that she must be avoided somehow by sneaking in the back way through the cellar.

Saturday was a beautiful sunshiny day, with just enough of sharpness and bite of real winter in the air to give zest. Over at Journey's End most of the Freshmen were free in the afternoon, and after lunch found them running around the hall and in and out of one another's rooms in peculiar costumes. Scissors were requisitioned, and needle and thread, and there were many visits to the barn.

But no one was let behind the scenes. There was a big NO ADMITTANCE sign on the big doors. And who are we to wander in where we are not wanted?

Four o'clock and the call of a bugle!

Was it a bugle? Some peculiar clarion call, to which was later added another noise that was characterized by some one as "a cross between Scotch bagpipes and a Chinese orchestra."

"They are coming! They are coming!" cried some village children who had lined up to see the fun.

"They are starting from Potter Hall," said Effie to Jo Guilford who was standing beside her.

"I think the girls said they would come to Journey's End first," added Jo.

They came. The Bearskin Zouaves (sic)—that made up the band. A sturdy sixteen in blue gymnasium bloomers buckled into galoshes, sport coats of dark color, and topped by black fuzzy muffs that were tied to their heads by chin straps. Nor must we forget to mention the broad crêpe paper sashes of red, white and blue. Music? Yes, music from an orchestra of disguised ukuleles, chafing dish covers, tin basins, combs, and a couple of kitchen funnels for horns. Did these blow? Most lustily. For these were trained musicians and they knew the potency of such articles when a piece of tissue paper has been put over the small end to blow through.

The village boys attached themselves to the band and danced along beside them. They were appreciated!

They played "Hail Columbia" alternating with "Over There!"

Behind the band followed the Snow Queen, a jewel in white, enthroned among a huge pile of furs on Mr. Noah's one-hoss sleigh, drawn this time by the bona fide Maud. The snow-white horse, caparisoned in a white bed-sheet spangled with silver stars, nodded her head considerably in her efforts to dislodge some silver decorations that bobbed ticklishly around her nose. The fair Queen very democratically drove her-

self, and threw kisses to the applause that increased at every step.

Behind her, a little to the right and to the left, rode the King of Spades and the Jack of Hearts, situated on Mutt and Jeff. The two latter worthies were insensible to the honors heaped upon them. They did not like the band, and showed it plainly, by constantly side-stepping and balking. When, at a particularly thunderous climax Jeff actually reared, so that the King nearly lost balance and his dignity, the two were demoted and made to take a place far in the rear.

Behind this pair there were six pairs of snowmen, thus concluding the Queen's escort. Snowmen? Why, of course. An old bed-sheet tied around the neck and head and body and shoulders, stuffed irregularly with clothes and papers. Dark spots for coal blackened in with charcoal or shoeblacking, with holes to see and slits to breathe through. They made particularly sturdy snowmen, carrying, as their weapons, snow shovels.

This was Potter Hall's contribution.

As they drew near Journey's End the barn doors swung open and a wonderful menagerie issued forth: a gray elephant with measured tread, trunk swaying, and tail wiggling, yet who, in spite of his many elephantine perfections, almost broke in two; a bur-lapped camel with two huge humps; a cinnamon bear, led along by an Alpine climber (her hide had come out of Miss Cooke's closet, having been a present of long ago. That there were moth-eaten spots mattered not at all.) Two mammoth Buff Orpingtons followed, with huge blue ribbons hanging from their necks, labeled "Lord Elmhurst" and "Lady Hampden."

The latter also bore a sign: "For Sale. \$1,000, for the Endowment Fund." At the end of that contingent, Mary Hubbard bearing a sign on a broom-stick: "Our Goat should have been here, but somebody got it. So I'll be it."

Amid applause from the village houses, the stores and the post office and the parsonage they started forth. At Petersen Hall they were joined by George Washington crossing the Delaware on a bob-sled, accompanied by four rowers and a flag, a bizarre concoction drawn by eight liveried Colonials in powdered wigs. It was later admitted that a bob-sled did not exactly figure in the Delaware episode, but then, it was, as they said, in the nature of a "float." There was a regular escort of more Colonials in powdered wigs who went on foot.

The next hall contributed twenty raving Bolsheviki, mostly whiskers, rags and inarticulate sounds. How they had passed the immigration literacy test is a wonder. But they did know enough to complain with conditions as they found them, for a sign at their head bore the legend, "You made us what we are to-day." This group was followed by another of equal size in the guise of angels with flowing white whiskers, white robes and harps, singing hymnal music. The sign before this group read: "As we really are; Heaven is our home."

The most notable contribution that joined the line was another float on a bob-sled—a forlorn figure in black with neck bared, was kneeling, about to be beheaded on a soap box, like Mary, Queen of Scots, by a menacing figure in red that stood over her, wielding Stafford Hall's wood ax. That none might

flounder for lack of political acumen, the kneeling figure was labeled "THE TREATY" and the menacing figure "SENATE." Ahead went the sign, carried by one purporting to be President Wilson, "Help me save the Treaty!" and back of the float came a group of College Faculty, headed by the College President, bearing the sign, "We will help you, Woodrow."

This section created the sensation of the day. For if the individuals of the Faculty represented there had never before realized their precise personal idiosyncrasies, they now had a chance to see themselves in the eyes of their students. The caricatures were generous in many ways.

Students laughed in high glee, Faculty members at the side applauded when they found their counterfeits. Even the blasé moving picture men who had gotten wind of the proceedings maneuvered for good positions and clicked the shutters of their machines with broad grins on their faces.

The College President herself was no less appreciative, and as the end of the procession arrived at the top of Pageant Hill, and finally dispersed, she sought out her double and made her sit on the bench beside her.

Pageant Hill is the slope, where, in the green spring-time sit spectators to watch the May Day pageant and outdoor dramatics that are performed below. Now it was covered with snow, worn smooth and hard by the illicit coasting parties of dustpans and brooms. Here the contests were to take place and interested spectators arranged themselves on benches at the sides to watch.

There was a short business-like speech by Ruth Baldwin, a Junior, who was a manager of the Carnival,

and who enumerated the events and gave directions to contestants and public. And then the whistle blew for the first race.

It was the beloved coast down the hill the girls knew so well. Each class supplied four contestants on four kinds of vehicles, to wit, dustpans, baskets, barrel staves and brooms, each kind racing separately. Two Juniors won on dustpan and broom respectively, a Senior in the basket and a Freshman on the barrel stave. This was but in the nature of a preliminary. For again the winners had to get back on the mark and fight for the supremacy now of the vehicle itself. The broom was from the start considered a lost cause, as it was too rough for speed, so the Juniors cheered their dustpan. The Sophomores, who had no winner of their own to cheer, joined with the Seniors in speeding their basket. Only the Freshman with the barrel stave remained unencouraged. Suddenly Nan Larkin noted the situation.

“Go it, Freshman!” she cried. “You’ve every chance in the world. Go it.”

The Freshman grinned. She had every intention of “going it.”

With a shrill of the whistle they were off.

The broom lagged behind, the dustpan passed it and became entangled in the softer snow. But the basket shot ahead, being long and narrow, and having some sort of wooden runners underneath. The race lay between it and the barrel stave. Perched on her barrel stave with her skirts picked up all around her and holding tight to the end of her board for balance and sticking purposes, the Freshman just skimmed over

the top, not too dignified a sight. But lowliness hath its virtues, for the basket ran itself out in the deeper snow, while the barrel stave, which was ski-like in nature and frictionless, skimmed past and beyond!

Then followed a "chariot race," the teams consisting of one on skis driving a span of three on snowshoes. They followed the line of the drive for their oval, but disaster came at the turning point. Three teams upset and became hopelessly entangled. And so a slow but sure Junior team found a chance to pick its way and pass on to victory.

Followed a complicated obstacle race in relays. After a snowy roll part way down hill, the contestants put on snowshoes waiting there for them, took off their sweaters and put them in suitcases standing there, seized the suitcases and made their way to an ex-crescence farther down the hill. There waiting team-mates put on the snowshoes, seized the suitcases, ran up the hill again, opened the suitcases, took out the sweaters and put them on, took off the snowshoes, dropped the suitcases and ran on foot to the top of the hill. There another set of team-mates received the again doffed sweaters and started the roll down hill again. Repeated three times. It brought roars of laughter from the spectators, for to them the rapid exchange of snowshoes, suitcases and sweaters became hopelessly mixed. But somebody won the race. It was the Junior team.

Next, another relay race, not quite so comical with a slide on skis going down and a run on snowshoes coming up. This was won by the Sophomores. They

could not have been happy had they not won something.

Ski racing for form which followed next was the prettiest and most serious contest. Even the beginners on skis did well, and sped down the hill in short order. The Judge awarded the contest to the Senior racer.

The Juniors were five points ahead, with one race extra to their credit. Could the big snow battle, which came next and netted ten points to each pair of winners, wipe out this margin or would they add ten more points to the five by which the Odds were now ahead? The Freshmen nodded their heads sagaciously. The Juniors smiled back with confidence.

They all adjourned to the South Campus back of the Storey recitation hall for the snow-fight between the Odd and Even classes. Two snow forts and lines of trenches had been erected, bearing the colors of the two opposing garrisons. The patriotic call for forces had brought a hundred to a side, fifty of each class, for it was agreed that this even representation was the fairer way. Each person hit was a casualty and had to fall down, to be picked up by the Ambulance Corps waiting on the side with stretchers from the Infirmary and other first aid equipment.

“The side which has the largest number standing at the end wins,” announced Ruth Baldwin. “In fact, you are expected to figure to the last man, so that only one side will have any man up—unless the sides are so well matched they stand and fall together. When the whistle blows, it’s Go!—Attention! Ammunition ready! Go!”

They went! At first the throwing was indiscriminate, resulting in wild excitement and few casualties.

Then the Generals succeeded in rallying their men.

“Even classes! Even classes! Take careful aim! Never mind anything else,” they whispered behind their bulwark during a breathing interval.

“Odd Years! Remember instructions. Decoy maneuver next! ‘Target’ is the word.”

Whistle again. The sides approached each other cautiously and came quite near. The Journey’s End detachment were further down the right of their side, Pegs captain. A crowd of Sophomores were edging up on the qui vive to let fly.

“‘Target’!” whispered Pegs.

Thara Thayer, who could not have hit the barn door, advanced, the chosen sacrifice. She made a dash for the opposing side. Finding a good mark the Sophomores let fly their snowballs, and Thara fell under a heap of twenty.

But, oh, the ensuing slaughter. The disarmed twenty, stooping to make more ammunition, fell under the Journey’s End onslaught. Being at close quarters the Freshmen never missed.

The Even line gasped in horror to see their left wing go down. Suddenly a detachment in the center went down in a similar way. When the whistle blew for a rest there were big gaps in their line. The Ambulance Corps had their hands full. A frenzied conference of their leaders fathomed the strategy.

“Beware the decoy!” was the new order. “Don’t aim at it!”

The next contest, therefore, witnessed very careful throwing and few casualties. The Evens once bitten twice shy. Pegs sought out Nan Larkin.

“Let’s put our best pitchers for targets next, with several snowballs. They won’t hit them and, by the time they come to, the targets will have had a bully chance to score.”

Nan laughed. “You’ll do,” was all she said, and rushed back to start the maneuver.

The Evens sensed that something was up. Yet they would not aim at the decoys, but watched the others in mass, which gave the pitchers just the chance they wanted. When the Evens were struck by the oncoming snowballs they became confused. Leaders gave conflicting orders; the morale of their force was weakening. They could not think quickly enough. They were dropped by a snowball whether they fought or not.

Nine Evens were finally left to defend their flag and post, which they did most tenaciously. They remained hidden behind their ramparts while the others invited them to “come on out.” Some carefully dropped grenades got three. There were thirty left on the other side, but the brave six—Perhaps hunger drove them out! Who knows?—decided to go out and die game.

They did. The Odd thirty practically swallowed them up as they went over the top. The Evens’ fort was carried and the red and green flags carried away in triumph.

There were cheers and riotous singing. Even Ruth

Baldwin's stentorian announcement that the Odds had won the day with fifteen points ahead could scarcely be heard above the din.

There was a momentary lull only when Nan Larkin climbed to the top of the Odd Year trench and announced:

"Come on to Student-Alumnæ Building, everybody. There will be dancing and refreshments, under the auspices of the Juniors. Remember it's for the Endowment Fund. Every doughnut bought means a brick." She did not heed the roars, but went on, "Come on and get warm."

It was well on toward dusk by this time. But they went over and danced and ate and celebrated the Odd Years' victory until lights began to gleam in distant halls and dinner bells to ring.

CHAPTER XXII

“BUFF” IS PERSISTENT

THE Snow Carnival was about the last big celebration that the girls were to have that January; for, before they realized it, the Midyear exams, which had been looming up in the distance and casting their shadows before, were upon them. To the Freshmen who had never experienced anything similar, except their entrance examinations, it was like an ominous, impending evil to be dodged as long as possible.

Therefore, that Saturday night which witnessed the Odd Year victory, the girls fell to studying; for the following Monday began the week of Midyear exams. The Freshmen had Mathematics that first day, and all Saturday night, and (let us whisper it!) Sunday, they had crammed Solid Geometry formulas into all available convolutions of their brains. They went to Chapel resigned to their fate, vowing that the Faculty were at liberty to do their worst. And when they went out again, was it coincidence or the spirit of mischief that had made Professor Howard select that special recessional? There was a twinkle in his eye as he struck the first chords, and a dawning smile of appreciation from the College as they began to sing:

“On our way rejoicing,
As we homeward move—”

Were they rejoicing? Oh, well, Professor Howard had no mathematics or any other kind of exam to take. He could afford to rejoice.

A limp, exhausted lot of girls returned at lunch-time. One or two had come back before the allotted two hours for the examination were up, and had gone up to their rooms smugly, sharkishly satisfied with themselves, to cram for the next examination. Cram, did we say? Nay, such people never cram. They do their work at the time they should and merely brush up and burnish the golden threads of memory just before the ordeal!

But why should these Freshmen be doomed to another heavy examination the very next day? It was Latin this time. Most of the girls had had no other examination that Monday afternoon, and had spent their time going over Horace's Odes and Livy, notes and footnotes, and miles of Latin prose. That evening they did not linger over jazz tunes in the parlor. In fact, "quiet hours" were decreed to start immediately after dinner, and nobody stayed around for entertainment. The house was stilled for once, except that now and then the echoes of a discussion or an out-of-place laugh could be heard from some room where several of the girls were studying together. When the retiring bell rang at ten o'clock a few of the rooms still remained lighted, for there the occupants intended to take a "sit-up" and pursue Horace and Livy unto later hours.

The corner room, which was Pegs', was lighted. Pegs was there, cramming with Spice Becker and Julia. Thara, who was something of a "shark" in Latin, did

not feel the need of further refreshing on the Latin gentlemen and had gone to sleep with Mary Hubbard who was said to be a "fiend" in Latin.

"No, I shall sleep to-night, thank you," the latter had said, as with Thara she left the other three to their cramming. "The only thing that bothers me is that Solid Geometry we had this morning. I know I flunked it. I think I shall be doing cubical contents of cones all night long in my sleep. Anyway, it is the only time I can do the old things."

"It would be all right if that was all you did," called back her roommate. "I leave you to her mercy, Thara. Anyway, when I finally get to bed here, I shall sleep—for one night, thank goodness!"

Mary made a parting "face" at Spice as she closed the door, and soon the girls could hear the couches pulled from the wall, and they knew that Mary and Thara would soon be wrapped in enviable slumber.

It was long past ten—the clock on Founder's Hall had struck the hour twice again. Julia, who had been nodding violently, had finally taken refuge on a couch. Pegs was wide awake and declared she felt as though her eyes could now remain permanently open. Spice grunted, pulled her bathrobe closer round her neck, and declared she did not see why there had to be such a vile system of exams, anyway. She went on studying. Pegs took a cracker from the box at her elbow and pushed the box across towards Spice.

Spice was beginning to nod, while trying unsuccessfully to decline the noun "shoe" as of the third Latin declension. Suddenly Pegs became aware of a voice below-stairs, and then the sound came again, and

again. It was not one of the girls in the room next the parlor, she knew. They were too good Latin students to cram all night long.

She waited, tense, and the next time the voice seemed to come from the hall below. A door had creaked, and there were stealthy footsteps.

"I wonder what's the matter," she said to Spice. But the latter stopped short half way in a nod, blinked at her, and nodded again while her eyes slowly closed.

Pegs tip-toed to the door of her room and opened it a few inches.

"No, sir," she heard the voice say, "I won't let you out on a cold night like this. Indeed not."

"Me-ow!"

It was Miss Cooke and from the context of the conversation Pegs knew that she was having an argument with Buff.

"But I *can't* let you out, Buff."

"Me-ow! Me-ow!"

Pegs went softly to the head of the stairs and sat down on the landing. She could see what was happening in the dim light that shone from the dining room door.

"Are you having trouble, Miss Cooke?" she asked.

"Er—yes," said Miss Cooke, looking up, a little startled. "Is that—Margaret?"

"Yes."

"Haven't you gone to bed yet? You'll be so worn out you won't be able to think for your examination to-morrow."

"I'll go, Miss Cooke, in a little while.—Does Buff want to go out?"

“He does. He’s been so restless, he hasn’t let me sleep at all.”

It was evident that he had gotten Miss Cooke out of bed, for her nightgown showed under her carelessly donned kimono, and her bare feet in bedroom slippers.

“But it’s so bitter cold I can’t let him go out. I can’t trust him to come back soon.”

“Why don’t you put him downstairs, Miss Cooke?”

“I did. But he didn’t like it. He cried worse than ever, and scratched the door.”

“Me-ow! Me-ow! Me-ow!”

“He is irrepressible! Maybe he’ll get sick of it and come back soon if you let him out, Miss Cooke.”

“Me-ow! Me-ow! Me-ow-ow!”

Pegs laughed, for Buff was keeping up a regular obligato during the conversation.

“He is very persistent.—No, no, Buff!”

“Me-ow-ow!”

“I suppose if I don’t let him out I will stand here arguing with the cat until morning.”

“Me-ow-ow!”

“He’ll wake the whole house. This will never do.”

Pegs’ nerves were getting on edge by this time. “He has thick fur, anyway,” she commented, almost exhausted.

Miss Cooke had made up her mind. She was unlocking the front door, with a rattle that the night exaggerated and the stillness carried through the house.

“Now, Buff!”—“Me-ow! Me-ow!”—“You must come back right away!”—“Me-ow! Me-ow! Hurry!”

Hurry! Me-ow!"—"You understand? Right away!"
—"Me-ow-ow!"

Buff shot out of the front door. A beautiful white moon streamed in and a breath of clear cold air that made Miss Cooke hastily draw her kimono about her ankles.

"Don't stand there, Miss Cooke," suggested Pegs. "You will catch cold. Go back to bed, and then come for him again after a while."

Miss Cooke shut the front door.

"I may as well," she said, "but I shan't sleep until that cat comes back."

Pegs went back to her room, really feeling the better for what she mentally termed the "cat-séance."

"What was it?" asked Spice crossly, her eyes half closed.

"Miss Cooke. Buff wanted to go out."

"I should worry!" remarked Spice.

Julia was fast asleep on the couch, her Livy under her arm. Spice had her head on her crooked arm on the table. Pegs wondered if she should not put out her light and give herself up to her fate. But the light did not seem to bother the other two, or keep them from sleeping; she would study on a little while longer, and then—

She woke up with a start.

"What is it? Why did you wake me?" demanded Spice from the other side of the table.

"I don't know—listen!"

A distant muffled call came from outside the house.

"Here—Kit-Kit-Kit! Here, Buff!"

"Well?"

“It’s Miss Cooke, calling Buff.”

“Drat that Buff!”

“Kit-Kit-Kit!”

“I am going down.”

Pegs pulled her kimono close over her shoulders, hitched her stocking and went out.

On the front porch she found Miss Cooke considerably distressed.

“Why did you come down here, child? Go right back to bed.”

“But—w-w-why d-d-did you come out here after that old c-c-cat?” shivered Pegs from the half-opened door. “You’ll catch your death of c-cold.”

“He’s been out here over an hour and I’ve called him from all sides of the house. He just answers in the distance and won’t come back.”

“Let him s-s-stay out; he’s having the time of his life in the m-moonlight!”

“He’ll f-f-freeze to death—it’s s-s-so cold!”

“Now, Miss Cooke, you will freeze to death—not Buff. And you’ll get pneumonia, ’n everything! Do please come in!”

“I’ll have to get Buff!”

“Well, come in and get more clothes on first.”

“I think I will. I’ll dress and go out after him.”

“Ugh! You’ll never get him!”

“I’ll take some catnip, and a plate of liver!”

Pegs was laughing. It was too funny. It was winter fishing—a foxy, unwilling cat and a good sniff-some bait.

“If you must go out, Miss Cooke, I’ll dress and come with you.”

"No, go to bed, please, Margaret."

"I'm coming."

And Pegs tore upstairs two steps at a time.

"Is she still looking for that dratted cat?" inquired Spice out of a half doze.

"Yep," laughed Pegs. "Want to come and help get him?"

"Not much; and you're a fool to!"

"Go on to bed, then."

So Spice flung herself on the other couch while Pegs put on several articles of clothing, shoes, galoshes, skirts, a blouse and a huge top coat. Spice was already snoring when she turned the light out.

She found Miss Cooke fumbling over the seat of the coat rack over some inducements for Buff. There was a good plate of liver and a package of catnip, with a newspaper to spread it on in the snow. The catnip was the trump card.

"I have my electric lantern; we may need it," whispered Miss Cooke. "You take that, and I'll take the liver and the catnip."

Half laughing and expectant of adventure, Pegs took the flashlight and in a moment they were descending the stairs into the shivering moon-swept night.

"I think he's out in back," whispered Miss Cooke.

The snow crunched under foot; shadows loomed up big and mysterious; the moon was slowly sinking.

"Buff! Buff! Buff! Here, Kit-Kit!" Miss Cooke was cooing softly.

"Mee-ee-ow!" came the soft answer near the barn. Miss Cooke advanced softly. Something scurried. "Here—Kit-Kit-Kit!"

“There he is!” whispered Pegs. “He’s over by the Class A chicken-coop now!”

Miss Cooke laughed nervously, a bit exasperated.

“I’ll get that wretch! I’ll put the catnip and liver in the middle, so he’ll stop half way. You stay here, Margaret.”

Twenty feet away Miss Cooke stopped and arranged her bait. Then she advanced with the catnip temptingly held at arm’s length.

“Kit-Kit-Kit!”

As she neared, Buff made a bee-line for a point diagonally opposite, near the kitchen door, which left Miss Cooke and Pegs at the corner bases of a nice isosceles triangle. Buff meowed from the lattice work under the back porch.

Pegs tittered. “He’s as bad as Hamlet’s father’s ghost,” she remarked, as Miss Cooke came back in her direction again. “If only Hamlet had had catnip and liver, who knows, he might have done better.”

Miss Cooke did not seem to see any humor in this remark.

“We have liver,” replied Miss Cooke seriously. “I think,” she went on, “if we opened the kitchen door, and lit the light inside, and then put the plate of liver inside in full view with a trail of catnip leading up to it from the porch—”

Pegs was laughing. “And I’ll get just in back of the door, inside, and push it to, the minute he gets in—” She was enjoying it all hugely.

“Me-ow!” called Buff softly, now from the farther end of the garden.

“He’s almost out in the road now.”

“Maybe he’ll come back around the other side of the house again,” suggested Pegs. “There—what’s that noise? I hear the snow crunching.—Goodness!”

From around the other side of the house a figure in white was approaching.

“The College ghost!” she whispered, backing up to Miss Cooke and clutching her arm.

Miss Cooke, looking in the same direction, started violently at the touch.

“There is no such thing as a ghost,” she reassured Pegs—and herself.

“I know. I know. But it is something, anyway. See—it’s coming toward us—of course there are no ghosts.”

They were in the shadow near the barn door. For they did not like to stand in the path of the Thing’s advance, and they were making ready for a backward retreat.

“I am going to speak to it,” whispered Miss Cooke.

“Don’t,” whispered back Pegs, instinctively trying to restrain her.

“I’ll find out what it is,” persisted Miss Cooke.

And as the Thing came within ten feet of her, she took the light from out of Pegs’ hand, and flashed it upon the apparition, demanding, “Who is it?”

“Mary Hubbard!” Pegs nearly sank to her knees in the snow, her legs almost giving way.

“Hush!” whispered Miss Cooke, turning out her light.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE MAGPIE'S NEST

It was the figure of Mary Hubbard, clothed only in a nightgown, and it neither saw nor heard them. It merely blinked at the unexpected flash of the light which Miss Cooke immediately clicked out.

Buff was forgotten temporarily, to be recalled dimly as his soft call came now and then from some distant point.

The white figure came directly for the barn, fumbled a moment at the knob of a small door beside the great barn door, opened it without further hesitation and went in.

All sorts of thoughts were flashing through the minds of the two outside. They were the dawning of ideas.

"Do you think—" began Pegs.

"Hush," said Miss Cooke. "Let us follow her and see what happens. But don't wake her up suddenly."

"What do you mean?" exclaimed Pegs aghast.

"She is asleep—walking in her sleep, I think."

"Good gracious!" as the two wedged together inside the small door.

"Listen," whispered Miss Cooke, "I think she is going up the ladder to the hayloft—by the creaking of it."

"Flash your light, Miss Cooke."

The lamp was flashed for a moment. On the other side of the barn was revealed the white figure, going up the small creaking perpendicular ladder, evidently having a little difficulty because of her nightgown and something they now saw she carried in her left hand.

“Shall we follow her?” asked Pegs. “Won’t she fall?”

“No, let her alone,” replied Miss Cooke. “She is more likely to hurt herself if she is startled.”

Mary had gained the hayloft above their heads. They could hear her feet swishing in the hay. Then they heard her sink down and they held their breath. She might have lain down to sleep for all they knew, and they were beginning to get impatient. They were debating whether they should go up after her, when they heard a stir and a sigh above their heads, with the sound of her rummaging about in the hay.

“She must be looking for something,” suggested Pegs. “But why she should look for it there, I don’t know. Listen—she is rummaging—*some!*”

Miss Cooke was about to speak when the rummaging ceased and again was heard the stealthy walking in the hay, and then the creaking of the ladder. They stood aside in the dark. A warm figure almost touched them as it brushed past. They could hear the measured nasal breathing.

“My! My!” was all Pegs could say, as they followed again into the night air.

Straight for the front of the house went Mary. Of course the front door had been left open by them. No, Mary disdained the front door and as they came around the corner of the house, fifteen feet behind her,

they saw a white figure shinning up a pillar to the roof of the piazza.

"My! My!" was all Pegs could find to repeat, while Miss Cooke watched breathlessly.

Mary disappeared inside the window into her dark room.

"She is the star climber in the gym," muttered Pegs; "it never occurred to me."

"Do you think we had better wake her up and give her a hot drink?" asked Miss Cooke, pursuing a different line of thought. "She will catch her death of cold."

"No, don't. If she is waked up, it will startle her too much. Better wait until morning. Then you can give her a preventive."

The night was far gone, thought Miss Cooke. Morning was at most but three hours off, and a good sleep is always of use. So she nodded her head in acquiescence.

"But, what I'd like to know is," went on the excited Freshman, "what was she rummaging around in the hay for? What do you suppose, Miss Cooke? Eggs?"

"Eggs! Perhaps," replied Miss Cooke. "I have another idea, though."

"So have I," exclaimed Pegs, breathlessly. "Hadn't we better go and see? We have your electric lamp."

Miss Cooke, who had by this time quite forgotten Buff, was ready to investigate; and a few moments saw them at the foot of the ladder in the barn.

"Be careful when you get up there, Margaret,"

warned Miss Cooke. "There are many holes. I will follow and hand the light up to you."

"Oh, are you coming?" excitedly broke in Pegs. "Do you think it's safe for you?—But," she added, not thinking for a moment she might have insulted the mountain climber, "I guess I'd like you to see whatever I might—might find."

Pegs was on her knees in the deep hay. "I think she went to this corner—that's what it sounded like." And while Miss Cooke held up the electric lamp, Pegs began to dig into the hay with her hands and arms.

"We'll go over this inch by inch," she went on, her tongue getting away from her feverishly. "I am just wondering what I shall find.—Perhaps, perhaps—Oh!"

Miss Cooke flashed the light into the nest she had dug up. A nest—a magpie's nest—lay revealed to their wondering gaze.

"Spice's silver hair brush! A pair of gym bloomers!" Pegs laughed hysterically. "And look! She just buried her Livy and her Solid Geometry!—And money! Oh, Miss Cooke! That must be my hundred dollars! Here—count it!"

With shaking hands Miss Cooke counted the bills in her lap as she squatted in the hay, with the electric flashlight in the hay beside her.

"It is a hundred, Margaret, child!" said Miss Cooke, almost weeping. "Think what all this means."

"It means that Jo Guilford is exonerated. It means—oh, it means so many things!"

"Don't get so excited, dear," said Miss Cooke. "Come in from the edge of the loft."

"Oh, there are such loads of things more. An old orange—college crackers—a red tie—a nail file—a shoehorn. And what's this? A letter addressed to you. Please look at it? What is it?"

"Bless my heart! It *is* addressed to me!" Miss Cooke moved her glasses on her nose and tore open the envelope. "Why—why—" she gasped. "It is a note from Josephine Guilford—December 18th—why, it is the note Josephine gave to Mary to give to me when we thought she had run away!"

"Oh, Jo! Jo!" groaned Pegs. "I am going to get her, Miss Cooke—No, no, I can't rest until she comes out and sees for herself—there," she threw into the hole the hundred dollars she was holding in her hand. "And after I've apologized, I'll bring down Spice, and make her apologize, too, on her knees!"

She left Miss Cooke wiping her tear-wet glasses thoughtfully, and felt her way down the ladder. In five minutes she was back again, dragging over the hay the wondering Jo Guilford, who had barely been given time to throw on some clothes and a top coat.

"There!" cried Pegs dramatically, waving her hand towards the magpie's nest and holding aloft the electric torch. "There are the stolen things—my hundred dollars—Spice's silver brush—even your note, Jo Guilford, to Miss Cooke when you went away! Everything! Everything!"

"But—but—do you think I put them there?" asked Jo, startled, but looking stiffly from one to the other.

"Josephine dear," cried Pegs feverishly, "we did not say *you* put them there. We found the one who did!"

And then the whole story came pouring out like a

cataract over a precipice, with nodded confirmations from Miss Cooke, still squatted down in the hay.

“Jo, dear!” cried Pegs at the end. “I brought you here to show you and to apologize to you. I knew you never did it, and I should have apologized to you long ago! Only I am a weak character and—and—oh, well!”

She threw her arms around Jo’s neck, while the safe and sane Miss Cooke warned them not to get too near the edge.

“Everybody shall know about it—everybody!” was Pegs’ promise.

“Everybody except Mary,” commented Jo.

“Yes, that is so,” said Miss Cooke. “For Mary must never know she did this. I will have to talk to the doctor about it and write to her mother—But I think, girls, we had better go on to bed now. It must be three o’clock. To-morrow we can tell the other girls.”

They climbed down from the hayloft, one after the other.

“This has been a strenuous night,” breathed Pegs, as they got out into the open again. “I wonder if I shall pass that Latin exam. Ugh!—Anyway, I’ve passed the exam on my conscience and that’s worth ten A’s!”

“My! What was it started us?” asked Miss Cooke, trying to get her bearings.

“Mee-ow!” came the soft answer from the kitchen window.

“It’s Buff! I quite forgot about him!”

And Buff, who had found the liver which they had forgotten in the snow and gorged himself with it, and had partaken copiously of that "insane root that takes the reason prisoner," was now ready to go into the warm house, and graciously allowed himself to be gathered up in his mistress's arms.

CHAPTER XXIV

RESTITUTION

SPICE did not apologize on her knees to Jo Guilford. In the excitement of the examination the next day, she escaped. But Pegs whispered mysteriously to groups of the girls after breakfast that morning, when Mary Hubbard went up to make her bed and Miss Cooke followed with a dose of medicine, and, their curiosity on tip-toe, she took them out to the barn—all but Spice who refused to be “bothered”—and up to the crunching hay.

“Now, girls,” she said, “I want you to see the thing with your own eyes and I hope it will sink into you, just as it did into me, what wrong, dreadfully wrong, things we’ve been thinking of one of our number. I didn’t mean to make a speech—but just look, look!”

She pulled back the hay and uncovered the insane hoard. They stood amazed—aghast—then giggled.

“Do you mean Mary Hubbard put these here?” asked one of the girls.

“Well, she buried her Livy and Solid Geometry here, so I judge she buried all the rest, too. Miss Cooke and I watched her. It was most uncanny!”

“Well—well—and Jo Guilford?”

“That’s the crying shame of it all, Julia. We were so disgustingly underhanded about it, we didn’t give her a chance to defend herself—ever.”

"I knew she couldn't have done such a thing," said Fanny.

"Why didn't you come out and say so? Or tell her?"

"Why didn't you?"

Pegs was stumped for a while. She had no excuse.

"I guess it's the mob spirit among us. We led each other on and were afraid to break away. I was perhaps more cowardly than the rest of you, for I was absolutely convinced that Jo had nothing to do with it. But it's just like seeing a fly tangled on fly-paper: so long as you don't feel her pain and agony, there *is* no pain and agony and you turn your back and let her suffer. It's just a common ordinary household affair, that fly-catcher. Everybody uses it—but it's mighty cruel."

"Turn that to Latin prose, dear," remarked Julia, the first to come out of the influence of Pegs' speech. "'Ode on a Captured Fly.' We will publish it in the *College News*."

"But Pegs is right," championed Sarah. "I am really ashamed of myself. I think we ought to do something for Jo. Get together and buy her something."

"I think she would refuse anything like that from us, Thara," said Pegs, "she's too high-spirited and just because she's poor she'll be extra fussy about material gifts. Anyway, we'll have to make it up to her for having been so nasty. Maybe we'll find some special way to show how sorry we are.—There goes the Chapel bell. Oh, my Latin exam! Has anybody an extra blue book for sale?"

“But just imagine Mary Hubbard!” they commented, as they went, backward, down the ladder. “Can you imagine?”

“I *can* imagine such things,” from Pegs. “That must have been her other personality that Lou was talking about. Only remember—don’t talk about it outside. And Mary is not to know.”

Spice never went near the magpie’s nest. She waited until the missing brush and comb were brought to her. She turned them over and over, unbelieving. And yet, she was convinced, too, for the thing that worried her now was Mary Hubbard as roommate. She sought out Pegs for advice.

“You can’t do anything,” said the latter. “Mary is not going to eat you alive, and you’ve roomed with her for months without knowing.”

“Well, she might do something. She is not accountable in her sleep. I am really afraid.”

Pegs laughed.

“It serves you right for being so hard on Jo Guilford without reason,” said Pegs. “It’s direct punishment. Now sizzle.”

Spice was sizzling. After ineffectually seeking solace and suggestion from the various members of the household, she went to Miss Cooke, trying to have her room changed, and finally suggesting that Mary Hubbard be put upstairs in the big front room, which was really large enough for three, and herself being given the little room alone, on the ground of her health. Miss Cooke refused summarily to do anything of the sort, and instead gave Spice the lecture

she had been saving up for her. Spice was sorry she had ever brought up the subject.

She went away. Feeling disconsolate and ashamed?—No, indignant and persecuted. Nobody was sorry for her except her mother at home, who received her tales of woe and accepted what she wrote in good faith.

Poor Mary, meanwhile, was "treated like a dog." She could not understand Spice, but Spice had had enough experience with the results of her tongue as regards Jo Guilford to attempt to come out into the open with Mary.

Spice really suffered. Pegs declared it did her heart good to see it.

For Spice did not apologize at any time. She did not see why she should.

As for Jo Guilford, she took their apologies when they were severally given, as she had their other actions—silently, coldly. It meant nothing to her now. She knew she could get along without their friendship. Why should she bother at this late day?

Pegs was secretly grieved at her failure to touch Jo's heart. But then what right had she to expect that she could? Pegs ransacked her mind for a way to overcome the barrier; at last, accidentally one day, the remedy came.

She was returning from a last recitation at 4.30 one afternoon. It was the week following the Mid-year exams, and Pegs was highly excited to find in her letter-box in the post office—as did the other Freshmen—a card from the Registrar's office with her standing for the first semester.

Her fifteen hours of work had netted her two "Credits," three "Pasts" and another "Credit" in Gymnasium work. Pegs was fairly skipping home. How her Dad would love to see that card now! He would double her allowance on the strength of it. How she ever got it she did not know, but there it was, and the report bore her own full name on it!—Margaret Louise Sutton Whiting. Well, she would celebrate—she had that hundred dollars and she would do what she liked. She had already been celebrating with two other Freshmen from the Campus, whom she had treated to hot chocolate at the village store fountain, and her thirst now took her directly to the dining room for a glass of fresh water. She was just about to lift the pitcher with the ice tinkling in it when she overheard an interesting remark from the kitchen.

"So your birthday is the same as George Washington's."

It was Effie that was speaking. She could see her through the pantry windows, just stooping down to take a towering sponge cake out of the oven. Jo Guilford, who was putting strawberry jam into a fancy glass bowl, responded with a smile.

"That is one honor fortune gave me. So you see I always have my birthday celebrated!"

The thought that flashed through Pegs' brain was almost too much! She nearly dropped the pitcher. She went flying up to her room, threw her books on her couch, and nearly upset Thara sitting on the edge of the other.

"I have it! I have it!" she cried, hugging Thara to distraction.

"What have you?" questioned Thara. "Not anything bad?"

"An idea!"

"Why didn't you say so at once! I couldn't imagine what might have happened. But tell me. Only go easy. Ouch, my hair!"

"Jo Guilford's birthday is on Washington's Birthday."

"Ye-es?—What of it?"

"We'll give her a birthday party and we'll have a regular bang-up sort of time. We'll talk it over with the other girls—and we'll get her a birthday present—and I'll contribute any or all of my hundred dollars to the expenses!" It all came out with a rush.

"Margaret!"

Thara almost fell over. She had been so startled that she called Pegs by the almost unheard "Margaret."

"Let's get Julia and Fanny. Thara, we're going to celebrate Washington's Birthday!"

"That'll be perfectly bully!—But, Pegs—as to contributing all of your hundred—that's rather an exaggeration, isn't it? And maybe there are a few amongst us who would like the privilege of contributing."

"Oh, all right. We'll make it a house affair, if you like. Maybe it won't be anything like one hundred dollars—I guess not. But I'm not going to spare any money to make it a regular affair—no stinting! We're going to have some party!—Oh!"

“What have you now?” inquired her roommate as Pegs paused with another exclamation.

“I forgot—I passed everything and got two ‘Credits’ besides Gym!”

“Pegs! That’s worth shouting about!”

“That’s what started me going!”

And she had forgotten all about it with the advent of the other idea!

“Oh, Thara, I’m afraid I’m getting to be a scatter-brain. Let’s see your card, sweetheart. But you got Credit for everything.”

“No-o! My Math was pretty bad. I wonder I passed at all. But the Lord loves babes!”

And they fell to discussing their standing, their chances for a degree, college methods ad infinitum.

The rest of the month passed faster than they had expected, with the hard work of getting started in the new semester. There were new subjects, some changes in professors, more Latin, Trigonometry, a new course in English and new electives. Also there was more snow with good skiing and coasting. The roads, that had been rendered impassable by the blizzard and continued snowstorms, were opened up just enough for the trolley cars to pass, and all other traffic was by sleigh.

But in the midst of all, preparations were secretly being made for celebrating the two birthdays on the 22nd of February. Brains were set to working and as the time drew near Miss Cooke was frequently consulted about household arrangements. The 22nd was a Monday, and this made two grand holidays.

There was only one drawback to it all—Spice Becker. When the proposed celebration was mentioned to her, she grunted with disgust, then grew very red and soon after disappeared to her room. Spice managed to have herself invited away for the holiday to the home of an aunt who lived near by, and so avoided the party. There was an almost audible sigh of relief at the announcement of the proposed absence.

And then the great day dawned. Miss Cooke had connived with the girls and sent Jo on a long-promised visit to her cousin's at Hampden Falls, together with two dozen of Class C's eggs. She was to spend the day there, for Cousin Carrie knew Jo's mother well—and return in the evening in time for dinner.

Jo returned just twenty minutes before the dinner hour. As she opened the front door she stood in amazement at the sight of the decorations. Ferns and palms, loaned from the College plant houses on the earnest plea and guarantee of Miss Cooke, stood in the corners, while mingled with the green, streamers of red, white and blue crêpe paper hung across the hall and dining room. Wicker chairs filled with soft pillows stood in the corners under the palms. The whole place seemed transformed.

“Are we having a celebration?” asked Jo, of Pegs, who was standing near the door on a stool, trying to fasten up a decoration by ineffectually pushing a pin into the hard wood panel.

“Yes, we're celebrating the big birthday.”

“I didn't know, or I'd have stayed home and helped. And I'm dreadfully late.—All of you are all dressed up and ready.”

“Not quite. But you have twenty minutes to wash and dress. I’ll come up and help you.—Don’t worry about the dinner. Effie’s taking care of it.”

And when the dinner bell was ringing, Pegs was hooking up the last hook of a pink and white organdy that made Jo look like a butterfly.

“What wonderful decorations!” exclaimed Jo, as they came down together.

“That was Thara’s artistic taste. She was Decoration Committee.”

“Wonderful! Are you expecting company?”

“The person in whose honor this celebration is given.”

Pegs was smiling, as she drew her arm through Jo’s. The other girls trooping down the stairs, noisily, hungrily, curiously, were smiling, too.

“But George Washington—”

“Others have been born since the Father of His Country.”

Miss Cooke appeared at the door leading from her apartment, dressed in her black grenadine.

“Oh—Josephine! You are back! I was afraid you’d be delayed. Come and sit beside me. This is your place to-night, and Margaret sits on the other side of you.”

“What others did you mean—Margaret?” asked Jo, as they pulled out their chairs and were sitting down at table.

“You, dear.”

“Wha—”

The exclamation from Jo halted as a flush of red mantled her face. She had never before lost her

equanimity. It was a good thing that Miss Cooke announced that instead of the usual blessing they would sing "America." It helped Jo recover her poise. She listened breathlessly to Pegs whose arm was about her and who was explaining that it was her birthday they were honoring as well as George Washington's. She gazed almost in a daze at the table, the decorations, the hand-painted menu cards, and in front of her place the gorgeous bouquet of American beauties, from the girls, such as she had never hoped to own in all her life. And at the foot of the vase, a complete set of Robert Louis Stevenson, her best beloved author, in little flexible leather volumes—the separate gift of Pegs Whiting.

Jo looked up to catch Effie's eyes smiling at her from the end of the table where she had begun to serve with the help of two Freshmen who had volunteered for this occasion. Then she caught the general smile all around.

"I—I don't know what to say," she faltered, and her eyes became suspiciously shiny. "I—I—"

"Don't say anything, dear," burst out Pegs, coming to the rescue. "Don't say anything.—*Eat!*—My! I haven't tasted oysters on the half shell since my entrance exams!"

And they did eat—all of them—for from the oysters on the half shells to the ice cream and demitasses it was a great feast. And happiness reigned. Miss Cooke had insisted on providing the essentials like roasted Class C fowls, asparagus and cranberries, with one of Effie's specially light and fluffy sponge cakes, while the girls had seen to the embellishments.

Then came the toasts, drunk in lemonade, and after that Thara sang "Drink to me only with thine eyes," "Auld Lang Syne," and other of their favorites, while they all joined in the choruses.

They had touched Jo Guilford's heart at last. Gone was the reserve, the aloofness. Instead there was a radiant personality with the readiest smile of good fellowship and liking. There was no reference to the past nor was any reason given for the elaborateness of the affair. Jo Guilford was really happy with them for once, they knew, and as they adjourned to the parlor to dance—the ban on dancing having been lifted by Miss Cooke for that one night—one meek, little, far-away Freshman was heard to say: "Isn't Jo Guilford fine! I think Spice Becker is the funniest girl!—And won't she be wild at what she missed to-night!"

CHAPTER XXV

THE BREAK IN THE ICE

By avoidance of the issue Spice Becker thought she had escaped it. But the Great Recompense knows no escape, whether here on earth or in the Great Beyond. It bides its time; it never misses nor forgets. It pays always.

Spice may have regretted missing the marvelous viands of the Birthday celebration, but she grunted in apparent disgust and disapproval when her roommate told her of the affair.

"I think you have all gone mad," Spice said, but that was as far as she would go, for she never intimated to Mary Hubbard just why all this was done. Be that to her credit.

February passed into March, the weather grew milder in spells, and the snow that had accumulated on the roads and fields began to show signs of melting. There was still skiing and snowshoeing for those enthusiasts who could take off for an hour or two in the afternoon to steal out into the open air. There was even good coasting and the skating had continued since Christmas on the part of the lake that had been cleared.

The Journey's Enders had been especially partial to skating—even the generally busy Jo Guilford—as the Upper Lake with its fine skating stretch was quite near

them, and since the Midyear exams had been their daily meeting ground. It was with really regretful hearts that they felt the cold grow less sharp, and saw the snow melting into little streams at the edge of the walks in the sun.

One Wednesday a party from the house went down to the Lake to take their "farewell skate," so they said—Sarah, Julia, Fanny and Spice Becker, and a little later Pegs persuaded Jo Guilford to go with her.

"How's the ice, girls?" called Pegs, waving her skates. "Any good?"

"Not especially," called back Julia. "It's getting thin and last night's rain broke it all up at that end," pointing towards the dam.

"Oh, well, it's good enough for to-day anyhow. Who's been doing the figure eight?"

"Fanny. Pretty good, isn't it?"

Pegs was lacing up her skating boots to which her skates were attached. She looked from where she was kneeling to Jo Guilford standing beside her.

"Why don't you put on your skates, Jo? Don't you think the ice is good enough?"

"Oh, yes, but . . ."

"Why not?" queried Pegs, looking at her searchingly.

"Why, I didn't know Spice Becker was here," looking across to where the girls were skating.

"What difference does that make? Isn't the Lake big enough for both?"

"Well, it's big enough as far as I am concerned, but it's embarrassing just the same. She won't like it and I am afraid I'll spoil the party if I come in."

“Here—let me strap your skates.” Pegs was very decided. “You were going skating with me.”

Jo laughed and allowed Pegs to buckle on her skates while she held to the younger girl’s shoulders. Pegs was putting herself out in every way to show her appreciation of the girl who was working her way through College, and somehow doing things for others made her think less of herself. Together they stepped out on the ice and began to circle round the Lake.

The others were cutting fancy figures on the ice and every once in a while Pegs, who was holding Jo by the hand, would pull her toward the group to watch the evolutions. Spice did not like it—Jo could see that out of the corner of her eye—and when finally Pegs remained and became frankly one of the group, all the while keeping Jo with her, Spice skated off at a tangent and began to circle the Lake by herself.

Spice Becker was no mean skater and her performance generally attracted an interested circle of on-lookers, but it was growing late and the few who had been on the ice had begun to go home. Finally the other girls went home, too, leaving Pegs and Jo, who had come after them and wished to stay a bit longer.

Spice had edged off toward the dam, for here there was a clear bit of ice, smooth and still fine because of its proximity to the break. She certainly looked her best, sailing like a bird over the smooth stretch, and as the others stopped to watch, the only fault they had to find was that she went too near the edge. Pegs skated up to her.

"Don't go so near the edge, Spice," she called; "it isn't any too safe—with your weight."

Spice snorted. With her weight!

"I guess it's safe enough," she replied. "I'm no elephant."

"Yes, but the ice is weak over there."

"Don't worry about me. This is my own little corner." So Spice skated away.

Pegs went back to Jo who was watching a small boy from the neighborhood trying to propel his sled across the ice by the primitive method—with his heels, as if it were a kiddie car.

"I'll pull you, son," she was saying to him, and she took hold of his rope and commenced to skate around with him in tow.

"I see you have a beau," said Pegs, coming up.

"Yes, on a string," laughed Jo.

"I'll show you the best method of locomotion," said Pegs, getting up behind the child and taking him by the shoulders. "Give him the rope to steer and I'll skate along and push him behind. Let her go, old man. Let me show you."

In two minutes Pegs was pushing the sled over the upper end of the pond, much to the delight of the youngster. Jo waved to them both from where she was skating. Below skated Spice in a circle, her head in the air.

Suddenly the thing happened!

Perhaps it was because her head was too much up in the air; perhaps it was because she so ostentatiously insisted upon skating near the edge; perhaps she was really thinking of other things—but suddenly she

seemed to lose her sense of direction, she continued skating directly on in a straight line, borne on by her impetus and incapable of stopping. For without so much as a shadow of an attempt to veer or stop, she skated straight into the hole in the ice.

Only one person saw it. When Pegs, a minute later, turned her young man round to push him toward the other end, she saw Jo Guilford skating madly toward the dam. Momentarily she wondered where Spice had gone. And then the energy in Jo's back, the intenseness in her stride as she forged ahead, told her that something terrible had happened. She remembered her own warning. She saw the whole scene before her eyes.

"Stay here, Johnny," she called to the child, who sat still and aggrieved at her defection. She had miles to go, it seemed, and her feet appeared to cover hardly any ground at all.

For a moment there was nothing but a violent agitation of ripples over the surface of the water. Jo's heart was in her mouth, as, having crawled out as far as she dared, she knelt over the edge. Perhaps she was caught under the ice! She knew Spice was no swimmer. But would her own strength serve for the two?

These thoughts crowded her brain. It seemed ages—perhaps it was only a few moments. A more violent wave was thrown up from the surface of the water in the hole, and a brown, disheveled head appeared. Jo caught at the hair and then at the arm which waved frantically in the air in a helpless effort to grasp at something—anything.

"Steady, there. You're all right," was all she said. "Keep quiet and don't struggle." And slowly she edged the girl closer to her.

Through the wet wisps of hair that covered her face Spice saw who it was that held her arm and comprehension began to return. She groaned and sought to release herself. A crack in the ice warned them both.

"For goodness' sake," the Sophomore cried, "hold as you are!—Pegs!" For over her shoulder Jo saw Pegs approaching with long strides.

"Hold her tight!" cried Pegs, as she knelt down and grasped Spice's other arm.

But the united effort to pull her out only broke the ice at the edge.

"The sled!" cried Jo. "Get it. I'll hold her."

Pegs went. She skated towards the little boy, who, realizing at last the situation, was racing towards them dragging his sled behind just as fast as his legs could carry him.

Jo should not have been so sanguine about holding Spice Becker. For the latter had begun to squirm herself out of Jo's grasp.

"I can get up alone," she cried. "Let me go."

She wrenched herself free, but the shock of the effort threw her back deep into the water.

Heart beating violently, Jo caught at one fast disappearing hand. She felt desperate and indignant. She took hold of Spice's arm with both hands, and with one tremendous effort, pulled her to the edge of the hole and over the breaking ice, until she had hauled her to a firm place.

Spice did not need to be told she was safe. She

rolled over on her face as they stooped over her. Was she losing consciousness? The two girls looked at each other. She was weeping!

"I think she is hysterical from the shock," whispered Pegs. "Let's get her home as soon as possible."

And with a little persuasion and no little muscle strength, they bundled Spice Becker on the little lad's sled, and sped her up the hill, to Journey's End.

In the dim twilight no one saw them go in. Only Mary Hubbard, who helped put Spice to bed, and Miss Cooke to whom Jo, once in, resigned her place and who administered preventive measures to her heart's content.

Spice Becker was decidedly fretful. She took Miss Cooke's preventives because she was afraid of the results of the cold immersion. But besides a cup of hot tea she would take nothing. Her hair-breadth escape overwhelmed her.

The girls downstairs talked about it in whispers and it was suggested by Miss Cooke that they leave her alone to go to sleep. Even Mary Hubbard was banished from the room for the night and was given asylum by Pegs and Thara.

But Spice did not go to sleep. She was thinking, thinking of all sorts of things, but above all she was shamed and humiliated. That such a thing should befall her—that she should skate into the hole—and that she should be pulled out by the one she abhorred most!

Her light had been turned out early. The girls found her transom dark when they went upstairs to study. But Spice herself lay awake and heard the

hours go by—eight, nine, ten and then all was quiet throughout the house. She lay in a dull, grieved torpor, trying to catch the meaning of the events that formed and dissolved in her mind like a kaleidoscope. What was it that she was searching after?

Eleven, twelve, one—she had heard all the hours strike. She turned on her face with a groan. Indeed, the Great Recompense was slowly getting the better of her.

But at that hour of the night, when her soul was wrenched and torn as only the selfish in their moments of awakening can be, understanding came to her, conscience awoke. The thing that had been coated over and atrophied with years of petting and coddling on the part of her family, suddenly came to life.

If any one had been awake that night at Journey's End they might have seen a figure in white going stealthily along the hall. It was no ghost; nor was it Mary Hubbard. It climbed the little winding stairs at the rear of the house to the top floor, walked gingerly across the upper hall, and slowly opened a door to the little room at the side.

The moon fell across a couch where Jo Guilford lay, her arm thrown across her face, sleeping heavily.

For a moment Spice Becker stopped in the doorway; then she stepped inside and shut the door, and with a quick movement strode across the room and threw herself beside the couch of the sleeper, burying her head in the downy comfortable.

“What is it? Who is it?” cried Jo, starting out of her sleep. When, regaining her senses and seeing the white-clad girl beside her, “Oh—is it Pegs?”

"No," groaned the other, burying her face deeper, "it is I—Spice Becker!"

"Spice Becker!—Spice—Why—But, my dear, you'll catch your death of cold going around like this. Here, put my bathrobe over you." And she reached for it from a chair beside her bed and threw it over the shivering girl.

"Jo," she sobbed, "Jo—is there such a thing as a female cad?"

"Why? I don't know what they call them. What do you mean?"

"Because *I* am a cad. I couldn't—couldn't stand it any longer. I shouldn't have waked you up, but—but—"

Jo was sitting up on her couch, her arm around the sobbing girl who knelt there.

She said nothing.

"Jo—Jo—I have come to ask your forgiveness. Not that I deserve it or should have it. But you've done for me to-day that which expresses something more than forgiveness—at least it is everything to a person as selfish as I am. Why, you actually saved my life, Jo—did that to *me!*—and I've been a cad all through. I hated you so, I didn't want you to do even that. I was so smart, I thought I could pull myself out of the hole.—And that second time I went in and was going down, down, I thought so many things—and I thought a lot of you, and what I had done to you, and how you had paid it back!"

Jo was smoothing down the disheveled hair, for the face half smothered in the comfortable as she glimpsed it by moonlight was woe-begone and tear-stained.

“What you did just heaped coals of fire on my heart—literally—and they have been actually burning me ever since. I—I couldn’t rest to-night. I had to have it out. I—I suppose it’s my selfishness all over again. I should not have waked you up.”

Jo laughed. “Don’t worry about that,” she said. “It’s more than good to have it out at last, even in the wee hours.”

“Well—well—I’m such a coward, I can’t even have it out,” Spice broke off into a sob. “Well, you know what I’ve done, and what I thought, and how abominably I acted. Say to me what you like—if only you will forgive me!”

“I do forgive you, child. And that is why I shall say nothing.” Her own head was whirling. “Spice, dear, you almost broke my heart—literally you walked over it with spiked shoes—till if I hadn’t nerved myself and shut off all feeling I would have gone mad.—But there, I am talking and I said I wouldn’t. But you know how badly I felt though I tried not to show it, and after that you can really believe I forgive you when I say I do.”

Spice caught the hands that were running through her hair.

“The others all think an awful lot of you, Jo,” she said. “And I see why—now. But could you care—may I—some day—have your friendship, too?”

“Didn’t I say I’d forgiven you?” She pulled the girl up on the couch beside her.

“But could you—could you stand me?” said Spice fearfully, as she ventured to put her arms around the

frail Sophomore. "Goodness, you must be cold yourself, the way I have been keeping you up."

And Jo allowed herself to be enveloped in the capacious arms of the large Freshman, who, the last obstacle having been removed, was now at peace. Jo herself was happy. For she realized that the constant embarrassment under which she had found herself would now be over; misunderstandings were at an end; she could now feel free to become friends with the girls as her heart dictated.

"But you see I am still selfish, Jo," said Spice, throwing off the borrowed bathrobe. "For I am keeping you awake. I must go now. Imagine if Miss Cooke found her invalid here!" And with a laughing good-night she stole an embarrassed kiss and ran toward the door.

"Bless your heart," murmured Jo after her.

CHAPTER XXVI

“HAIL OUR CAPTAIN, HAIL OUR TEAM!”

WINTER at last was over. King Cold was gone and bleak March began sweeping out his house with her winds, scrubbing and mopping up the litter he had left. By almost imperceptible degrees the ice and snow on the fields and roads disappeared, and one morning, from the top-most branches of a bare tree in Main Street, came the song of a robin.

And then April.

The girls had all been looking forward to the Spring, in so many ways the most wonderful season of the year at College, and at last it was upon them. There were walks beyond, in the country toward the mountains, where brooks wound in and out and sang as they went, where violets grew in rich clusters and frail anemones nodded at every breeze. Shocks of apple blossoms flooded the countryside and song-birds buried themselves among the blossoms.

But it was not altogether the glory of the country that made Spring mean much to the girls. For the hockey games were coming. And these were one of the Spring's big happenings.

Up to the Easter holidays, whenever the day was dry and the ground hard, the class hockey teams were out practicing, playing with their own “subs” or with opponent classes in trial matches. Pegs and Julia were

out all the time, and Mary, on the insistence of Pegs, played on the substitute team. The doctor had prescribed plenty of exercise and out-door air and Mary was fast being cured of her nervous wandering.

The Freshman class having carried its point and having had the interclass hockey games postponed until Spring when they, too, would be in condition to compete, were hard put to it to make good. With the girls' return from Easter vacation the one topic of conversation was the hockey championship.

But alas and alack for the high hopes of the Freshmen! The first two games they played with the Seniors and Juniors they were sacrificed on the altar, and their defeat was expeditious and unhandsome. Pegs, who, as Captain of the Freshman team, had tried to coach them to success, wept bitter tears and held stormy conferences. Why? WHY? WHY?

She had four of the team up in her room one afternoon, three days before the final big game—that with the Sophomores.

“And I suppose we'll lose that, too,” remarked Jennie Crowell who was sprawling on Pegs' couch in her gym suit. “We've got the habit.”

“That's just the trouble with us!” Pegs flung out at her. “I once overheard a man in a car saying that a prize fighter that's afraid of being beaten is already beaten! He hasn't a chance!”

“But, Pegs, this is our first year. Think of all the training the others have had.”

“That's exactly the reason we had the season for the games changed, so that we could have a chance to practice. Now what have we done with it?”

There was silence. Frances Sherwood was swinging her feet thoughtfully back and forth.

“We lack class spirit, that’s what we lack,” was Pegs’ scathing verdict. “We’re scared—scared of our own shadows. We’ve no backbone in our make-up.”

Suddenly the noise of ascending feet was heard on the stairs and the door was flung wide to admit Julia and Thara, singing and skipping to the music as they came:

“Hail the Bridegroom, hail the Bride;
Let the nuptial knot be tied!
Sing their praises, hymn their praises,
Hail the Bridegroom, hail the Bride!”

They ended in a nerve-racking discord.

“That’s the thing! You’ve got it! Let’s have some good songs! Then we’ll have a chance of winning! Julia and Thara acquired that gem during their Easter vacation in New York. At ‘Ruddigore.’ They went to see the Gilbert and Sullivan opera ‘Ruddigore’ and since they’ve come back we’ve heard nothing but the Bridegroom and the Bride.”

“Hail the—”

“Cut it out! Please!—But look here, Thara, serve your fellow man. That makes a ripping hockey song. Take pencil and paper and stick in a corner until you have a parody on it. It will put their nerves on edge, believe me.”

“Pegs, don’t be so slangy,” put in Jennie.

“It needs slang or something. Thank your stars that I content myself with slang. But you’re right! I ought to cut it out.”

“‘Cut it out!’ There you go again,” said Thara.

“Never you mind Pegs, Thara,” suggested one of the others. “Just sit down and write us a bunch of new songs, and we’ll let the class practice them tonight. There’s a Freshman sing in Assembly Hall, and so far they haven’t had a song worth a second breath.”

“You hear, Thara,” commanded Pegs. “Get busy.”
 “Yeth—m.”

The great day dawned. It was a clear and cold and sunny day of early May, with the chill of winter yet lingering in the air. But, oh, how overcast were the Freshmen’s skies. In spite of all, Pegs had not been able to effectually lift their gloom.

To the contrary with the Sophomores. They had beaten both Seniors and Juniors, and their crack team was now ready to take the championship over the bodies of the fallen Freshmen. They were confident of winning; their players were skilled and famed, and their Captain was Betty Jones, the fastest forward the College ever had. No wonder they had a plume in their caps, and that plume waved most audaciously!

It was a Saturday afternoon, the final game of the series. The Campus was gay with color—blue for the Freshmen, red for the Sophomores—and their sister classes—Juniors and Seniors—wore the colors, too. Excitement was at fever heat.

The game was called for three o’clock, but by two the oval in front of the Gymnasium was crowded with spectators. To the right of the oval were gathered the Freshmen and Juniors, to the left, Sophomores and Seniors. Standards, thrust in the ground here and

there, bore the banners and mottoes of the rival classes, while, in between the standards, were massed the spectators, who wore the favorite color or carried pennants of red or blue that bobbed up and down. The crowds pulsed with excitement and suspense.

For on them, the spectators believed, rested the burden of making sure the victory. Their loyalty and spirit would play a big part in the game. Scarcely had a hundred or so gathered on a side when little song papers began to rustle. Cheer leaders on each side, batons upraised, made ready to take precedence in starting off. The Reds were the wee bit quicker. With a vim characteristic of them they rolled out the tune of "The Wild Man of Borneo," to reëcho among the surrounding halls:

"We—are, we—are, we—are, we—are
 The Class of '22,
 We—are, we—are, we—are, we—are
 The Class of '22.
 What in the world do we care!
 What in the world do we care!
 We—are, we—are, we—are, we—are
 The Class of '22!

"For

"They—are, they—are, they—are, they—are
 The Class of '23,
 They—are, they—are, they—are, they—are
 The Class of '23.
 What in the world do we care!
 What in the world do we care!
 They—are, they—are, they—are, they—are
 The Class of '23.

And again in quick repetition.

Scarcely had the song begun when recruits began to

pour in from all sides to swell the ranks of the two groups of spectators. So that it was with greater volume, and tremendous enthusiasm, that the Freshmen responded, their cheer accompanied by the beat of a drum.

(*Tune: “Over There”*)

“Sophomores swagger roun’, swagger roun’, swagger roun’,
 Think they own the town, own the town, own the town,
 Think they own the slickest hockey team,
 It’s a bird and it’s a dream!
 Think the victory sure, victory sure, victory sure,
 But—it won’t endure, won’t endure, won’t endure!
 Oh, they’ll quake with mortal fear,
 When they get that rousing Freshman cheer!

CHORUS

“Over there, over there, send the word, send the word over there!
 The Freshmen are coming, the Freshmen are coming!
 They’re going to get them unaware!
 So beware, have a care! Send the word, send the word over
 there!
 We’ll be over, we’re coming over, with the crack, crack, crackest
 Freshman team!”

But the Sophomores were not to be outdone, not taken in with vaunting and self-praise, for in a deep husky monotone, without music, they hurled back their defiance:

“Good—ness! Gra—cious!
 How audacious!
 For the Freshmen thus to face us!
 Will they lick us?
 Can they beat us?
 No—o—oh!”

Competition was growing keen. New songs were sung by each side, and it was now a song contest as well as a hockey match.

Suddenly down the walk by the side of Potter Hall appeared a little group in navy blue sweaters with large white numerals on the blue ground. It was part of the Freshman team coming from Journey's End where they had been in conference with Pegs Whiting. No sooner had they been sighted than the cheer leaders on the Blue side began to run from group to group. The Freshmen burst out with a greeting to the tune of the "Ruddigore" ditty that had become so familiar at Journey's End.

"Hail our Captain, hail our Team,
On the hockey field supreme!
Sing their praises, hymn their praises,
Hail our Captain, hail our Tee—ee—eam!"

The rising inflection and the discord at the end brought a laugh and a cheer from the other side.

"Second verse!" cried the cheer leaders.

"Hail our Captain, hail our Team,
On the hockey field supreme!—"

The Captain and Team whose praises were being sung waved to them from the green on the north side of the Gymnasium where they had taken up their quarters.

"Third verse!"

"Hail our Captain, hail our Team—"

The Sophomore side began to groan and made organized protest in a tremendous monotone:

"GIVE—US—A—CHANCE!"

"Hail our—"

But something was happening at the Freshman

quarters. Jennie Crowell, who had come from Sarah Newton Hall, was seen to draw aside Captain Pegs and to say something to her that had made her stand open-mouthed. This is the “close-up” of the conversation that caused such consternation:

“Frances Sherwood has twisted her ankle!”

“What—do—you—mean?”

“She’s twisted, wrenched, her ankle,” repeated the other.

No wonder Pegs was aghast. Frances Sherwood was her chief forward on whose support she had mainly counted.

“How did it happen?” queried Pegs when her Captain’s responsibilities had given place to human concern.

“Slipped coming down the stairs half an hour ago. She insisted she wouldn’t see the doctor, but they called one any way. She’s absolutely forbidden to try to play. Frances has done nothing but weep ever since.”

“Is it so painful?”

“It’s not the pain. She’s miserable because she had to go and do it just when we all needed her for the game.”

Pegs put her hand to her forehead and groaned.

“Hail our Captain” was starting up again.

“Well,” she said, “I suppose we have to go through with it just the same. It’s on team work I was counting, and now the chain is broken.”

“Cheer up,” said Jen, throwing her arm around the disconsolate Captain. “I’ll support you on the right and we’ll try to keep the team work up just the same.”

Pegs aroused herself.

“Who’ll take her place?” asked Jen, watching Pegs’ revival with deepest concern. “Couldn’t you move Julia Talbot there?”

“No—we need her as half-back. She must guard the Sophomore goal. It must be the one who played against Frances on the sub-team.—Mary Hubbard! Ugh!”

The rest of the team who had been hovering around the pair anxiously, reëchoed the exclamation.

“The other team,” said Pegs, “is not so wonderful. Mary Hubbard can play in spots. She got two goals from Frances once. How did she do it?”

They sent for Mary Hubbard who was squatting on the grass, Turk fashion, on the Freshman side of the oval. She was dragged into the Gymnasium amid protests of “I never can do it!” to reappear five minutes later in Frances Sherwood’s suit and blue sweater.

“I—I look like the real thing now,” she said, coming out to join the Freshman group. She looked down blushing at the numerals she had never hoped to wear.

“Well, live up to it,” said Pegs. “Follow me up wherever I go and watch the puck. When I say ‘Mary’ get ready to receive it and carry it on—And, Jen, you watch on the other side. We’ve got to win, just to show them we’re no mollycoddles.”

CHAPTER XXVII

THE VICTORY

"THERE comes the Sophomore team out of the Gymnasium," cried the Freshmen. "My, but they're proud! Look at Betty Jones."

"We—are, we—are, we—are, we—are
The Class of '22,
We—are, we—are, we—are, we—are
The Class of '22.
What in the world do we care!
What in the world do we care!
We—are, we—are, we—are, we—are
The Class of '22!"

The Sophomore team spread themselves over the oval and commenced to practice with the puck. On the north of the Gymnasium the Freshman team were choosing their hockey sticks. The Freshman onlookers saw Pegs take Mary Hubbard aside and coach her assiduously. They had heard what had happened. A pall of gloom enveloped them.

"Now," called the chief leader with a blue-wound baton, striving to lighten the heavy atmosphere, "let's sing for Beautiful Pegsy!" And the Blues burst out more or less melodiously:

"P-P-P-Pegsy! Beautiful Pegsy!
You're the only g-g-g-girl that we adore!
See the punt roll toward the Blue Goal!
You're the girl that's going to score the Sophomore!"

The Freshman team began to saunter toward the field, sticks on their shoulders, trying to put on a bold front. Only one hung her head timidly and looked self-conscious. This was Mary Hubbard, and she would have stayed behind had not Pegs locked her arm in hers and pulled her laggingly toward the oval.

The Freshman rooters saw this and started:

“M-M-M-Mary! Beautiful Mary!

You’re the only s-s-s-sub that we adore!

See the punt roll toward the Blue Goal!

You’re the girl that’s going to score the Sophomore!”

And then the Sophomores started in with one of their songs and the two became unrecognizably intermingled.

The Referee’s whistle brought silence. It was three o’clock.

The stillness was intense. A chill wind rustled through the newly leafed trees. The Referee’s voice alone was audible, giving instructions clearly and decisively. The Sophomores drew the better goal—to the north of the field. The Freshmen faced south.

They lined up for the game. Facing Pegs in the center was the confident Sophomore Captain—Betty Jones—who smiled on Pegs as a spider might on a fly at the door of her parlor. Behind Pegs was Jennie Crowell; in front of her, where she could watch her every move, was Mary Hubbard, looking rather more like a limp rag than a support.

The Referee again blew her whistle. Ground—click—ground—they’re off!

Betty was a shade faster and, while Pegs was com-



The Freshman team began to saunter toward the field, sticks on their shoulders, trying to put on a bold front.

ing down, gave the puck a quick whack. Through a gap in the Blues it went, and after it Betty—like a flash. But a Blue quarter-back got in front of the puck and stopped it. Crack! It shot back toward Jennie Crowell, who carried it with her down the field.

Shouts and yells of applause came from the Freshman lines, but the triumph was short lived; for before Jen could get within shooting distance of the Freshman goal, her stick was caught by a Red half-back. A short struggle—a twist—whack! The puck shot free from the entanglement of sticks and feet, and was pounced upon by a Red quarter-back, ready to receive it.

There was a thrill on the Red side, but the play was so close that they hardly breathed. Toward a Red forward now, just as a Blue bore down upon her. But the Red dribbled the puck down the field, dodging an enemy quarter-back. Straight on she went without seeing the waiting Blue half-back, who had come in her path and stood poised in gleeful expectation. The Sophomore lines were yelling for her to look out for the Blue, but apparently “rattled,” on she went. Their attention fixed on the blundering forward, few noticed that Betty Jones was keeping up with her. Just as she was about to collide with the Blue half-back, she gave a quick twist and shot the puck at right angles across the field. It was stopped by Betty, who, before the Blue guard could wake up to the new situation, shot it through the Red goal post.

The cheers that rose for Betty Jones were piercing, and her praises were sung in one big roundelay while the teams were taking their places again. Pegs' heart was sinking, but what she said to her team as they went

back was: "Tie that! We've got to put one through! Remember the plays we practiced!"

The teams lined up. Again Betty Jones led off, but her shot forward was stopped quickly. For the Blues were gritting their teeth and were determined she should not put it through. Back and forth went the puck, amid the cracking of sticks. Finally Jen got it and carried it down the field. A Red quarter-back was coming toward her—was upon her—whack! The puck was shot across to Pegs Whiting. Down the field continued Jennie. A quarter-back bore on Pegs. Whack! With unerring aim the puck shot back again to Jennie.

They were close to the goal! The Reds concentrated their forces before these two, intent upon breaking the combination. Back came the puck to Pegs. She was hopelessly beset by the half-backs. She must do something. She glanced in Mary Hubbard's direction. Mary was not supporting her. She was miles away, dreaming, two feet from the Freshman goal where she confidently expected the puck to arrive at any moment, such faith did she have in Pegs! Mary was left unguarded by the half-backs who had their hands full with Pegs and Jennie. A wild thought flashed through Pegs' head. She saw a gap among the legs and sticks. She shot the puck through to Mary Hubbard—and prayed!

And Mary? She was astounded at the thing that came to her feet. She emitted an "Oh!" She raised her stick leisurely while the guard rushed furiously at her. Then, whack! The puck shot between the Freshman goal posts.

Astonishment reigned and for a moment absolute silence. Nobody could realize what had happened, least of all Mary. She looked sheepishly at Pegs who ran toward her, expecting to be "called down" for not supporting her. Then, as Pegs hugged her "all over the field" the Freshman cheers rang out:

"M-M-M-Mary! Beautiful Mary,
You're the only g-g-g-girl that we adore!
See the punt roll through the Blue Goal,
You're the girl who just scored the Sophomore!"

The Referee's whistle blew.

"What's the matter?" The cheering abruptly stopped; the teams looked to each other for explanation.

"The half is over," explained the Referee, smiling.

"Hooray! We've tied them!" and Pegs almost carried Mary Hubbard off her feet.

The goals stood one to one.

The side lines were wild with excitement. Banners waved and song followed song in quick succession. The Sophomores were still confident of victory and tried to make it certain by their staunch encouragement. The Freshmen were not so down-hearted.

Not they; they merrily started on an uninterrupted round of

"Hail our Captain, hail our Team!
On the hockey field supreme!
Sing their praises, hymn their praises—
Hail our Captain, hail our Tee—ee—eam!"

And again.

And again.

Shades of Gilbert and Sullivan! The Sophomores'

ears ached and their brains spun round like gyroscopes. But soon they sent over the demand:

“AW! HAVE—A—HEART! CHANGE—THE—TUNE!”

And the Freshmen subsided, but only because they were out of breath!

The Freshman team sprawled on the green beside the Gymnasium, their coats thrown over them by solicitous worshippers, and rested, unmindful of the chilly ground, and breathed deep, and sucked oranges.

“Pegs, dear! You’ve got to beat!” was the earnest plea of Thara, who gazed at her from the depths of two deep brown eyes.

“Of course we will!” exclaimed Pegs. “And what do you think of Mary’s performance? Isn’t that child a peach?” And she shook that individual who sat there, absently looking at the Great Beyond between two wisps of hair that straggled over her face. And Mary came to and smiled.

The Freshman rooters were beginning on “Hail our Captain” again. There had been one lucid interval when they had sung “The Freshmen are coming,” but now they had reverted to hailing their Captain. The Referee was looking at her watch. In four minutes the second half would begin.

The Sophomore team issued forth from the Gymnasium, but stuffed their fingers in their ears to keep out the monotonous repetition of “Hail our Captain” that flatted and sharpened all over the oval. The Sophomore rooters, seeing the Freshmen were not inclined to come to a pause, and chagrined to the utmost, tried to smother the “Captain” with a tremendous repetition of

“Goodness! Gracious!
How audacious!”

until the halls around echoed and reëchoed like one great Bedlam which knew no end.

The teams were facing each other again. At the Referee's whistle the noise stopped. There was one last admonition from a little Freshman group to “BEAT IT, PEGS!” responded to by a groan on the other side and an exclamation, “HOW AUDACIOUS!” both of which the Referee squelched with a black look and upraised hand.

Phee-ew! Again they were off.

The playing now was closer, and the constant struggles and interlocking of sticks made the spectators hold their breath in suspense. The puck was often out of sight in the scrimmage. Finally it emerged at one side of the field, was caught by the swift forward who was Mary Hubbard's opponent, and carried down the field toward the Red goal. She took advantage of the momentary non-interference and shot for a goal. But, ugh! The stick of Julia Talbot, the Blue half-back, blocked the puck and sent it back up the field where it was carried on by a Blue quarter-back.

It was taken in the center by Pegs Whiting, but Betty Jones was there very much alive, and a hot contest followed. It began to look as though neither side would get the advantage and the game would end in a tie when Jennie Crowell managed to get her stick in and shot the puck to one side. Pegs got it again and shot it down to Jennie who had advanced forward to receive it. By quick side passing between them, they carried it forward down the field. They got it within

ten feet of the Freshman goal. Pegs made a short shot for goal. Ugh! A Red guard parried it just in time, to the great relief of the harassed Sophomores.

As they struggled for possession of the puck, Pegs could see Mary dancing erratically from side to side, for all the world like a gnat on a puddle of water. Mary bothered her—if she would only stay still! She took another quick chance—hit the puck out toward Mary. Mary almost stepped on it, stumbled a bit, and all but lost it to her guard. But she woke up in time to give it a short awkward twist with her stick.

It went just three feet toward the center, but Pegs was there, relieved of her guard, who had momentarily relaxed, surprised out of her vigilance by Mary's awkwardness. The Sophomore recovered just a second too late. Pegs did not stop to aim or fuss. She raised her stick and shot—straight through the goal!

There was no mistaking the joy of the Freshman side when they burst out

“P-P-P-Pegsy! Beautiful Pegsy!

You're the only g-g-g-girl that we adore!

See the punt roll through the Blue Goal,

You're the girl that just has scored the Sophomore!”

The goals were two to one in favor of the Freshmen. It seemed too good to be true. But their celebration was cut short by the Referee who was mindful of the passing of time and the hurrying of the Sophomore team to line up, to redeem themselves.

The whistle blew and the game started again. The Sophomores, who knew that little remained of the

time for the second half, were straining every nerve to tie the Freshmen. Pegs and her supporters at first tried for another goal, but when they saw the determination of the Red team they knew they could not get by, and so were satisfied to seek only to hold them, absolutely determined that the Sophomores should not pass. Every position was contested, every shot was blocked. There seemed too many sticks, too many feet in the way. Everything was difficult, everywhere were obstacles.

The side-lines held their breath in dead silence, except for occasional gasped "Oh's" and "Ah's." They cast nervous glances at their watches. The Referee seemed to keep one eye on the official watch on her wrist. The strain was tremendous, the tension at breaking point.

But as the minutes went by, a smile of relief was dawning on the Freshman countenance. The puck was blocked half way between the center and their goal.

"Phee-ew!"

The Referee's whistle blew. The second half was over. The game was at an end.

For a second the teams stood dazed, breathing hard. Then the Freshman team forsook their opponents and began to do a war dance. They had beaten the Sophomores!

On the Freshman side pandemonium reigned. Every conceivable kind of screech was indulged in, and with one accord they rushed on the field and encircled their beloved team. They lifted Pegs and Mary to their shoulders and commenced singing with more discord and less tune than before:

“Hail our Captain, hail our Team!
On the hockey field supreme!
Sing their praises, hymn their praises,
Hail our Captain, hail our Tee—ee—eam!”

The Sophomore lines at first were silent, stunned by the blow. The Red team, too, was silent, almost unbelieving. But when the realization came to them that with spunk, energy, good playing, and a bit of luck, the Blues had beaten them, they turned with one accord upon the Freshman players who were being borne down upon them. Hands extended?

No, not at all.

The Sophomore team, following the leadership of the redoubtable Betty Jones, went forward with both hands raised in the air, crying:

“Kamerad! Kamerad!”

CONCLUSION

THEY feasted and celebrated—surprised, delighted Freshmen. All over the Campus the Freshman team were much in demand at banquets, spreads and general festivities. Miss Cooke insisted on having the entire team at a sumptuous dinner, at which roasted Class C's were the predominating feature and post-prandial exercises included a multifold repetition of "Hail our Captain, hail our Team."

And so the Spring ran away as propitiously as it had begun. The days slipped by as they always do when they are happy days. May skipped into June in the midst of clear skies, the songs of birds and forget-me-nots. June had hardly arrived when Commencement and the summer vacation were at hand.

The twenty disbanded—left their loved house-mother and Effie to pass a quiet summer after their strenuous year. The girls themselves went home to various activities and circles. But our little group was destined to adventures as strenuous as they had already been through. Pegs and Thara and the handsome Ruth Hammond went to pass the summer on Jo Guilford's farm at Galesport, Maine. What happened there, what problems sought their ingenuity, what events their resourcefulness, will be told in the next book of the series, "PEGS DOWN EAST."

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